



THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the
National Federation of the Blind

JANUARY - 1971

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind—it is the blind speaking for themselves.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

“I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$___ (or,
“___ percent of my net estate”, or “the following stocks and bonds: ___”) to
be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and
administered by direction of its Executive Committee ”

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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NEW AFFILIATE—FLORIDA

by
Kenneth Jernigan

The NFB scores again—this time in Florida. Don Capps and Mary Ellen Anderson, along with a host of Floridians, did the work; and we now have a fine new affiliate. It came into being on November 14 in Orlando. It has four chapters and is called the Florida Association of the Blind.

Mary Ellen Anderson, one of our most dedicated people, spent several weeks in Florida making contacts and laying the groundwork. Don Capps went to the State several times and presided ably and effectively at the organizational meeting on November 14.

The essential details are contained in the following letter from Mary Ellen Anderson. I know that all Federationists will share with me the joy and pride of this latest triumph:

Superior, Wisconsin
November 20, 1970

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Returning from Florida, I found a shiny new snowmobile waiting anxiously in our garage for the three feet of snow which undoubtedly soon will be coming our way. I laugh thinking how hard I tried to convince the Floridians that snow really can be fun. I remember berating Jackie Gideons for never having seen snow, but my teasing lost some of its punch when she inquired as to my familiarity with palm trees. Perhaps someday you might find the time to apply some of your

diverse talents to devising a way to give us all the best of both worlds. On second thought, I'm sure I'll survive if it's not possible for you to divert your energies in this direction, as my recent experience in Florida was such that even the coming forty degree below zero Wisconsin winter will have a hard time chasing away the warmth of Florida.

I know you're anxious to hear all about our 45th State affiliate, the Florida Association of the Blind, as its formation on November 14th, 1970 heralds a new era for the blind of the State and bears eloquent testimony to the accelerating momentum and vibrancy of our movement.

It never ceases to amaze me that each new affiliate has a story all its own—each as exciting or more so than the last. This one, you will remember, started as early as the 1969 National Convention in Columbia with talk and preliminary planning and continued into the fall with your correspondence with Sam and Gertrude Sitt of Miami concerning the urgent need for a Florida affiliate and what could be done about it.

I was delighted to meet Sam and Gertrude and to discover that they were both veteran Federationists, having been active years ago in the Empire State Association in New York. The Sitts filled my mind with valuable organizational information and my stomach with strange little fruits and vegetables, the likes of which I had never seen before.

One thing that stands out in my mind about the organizational campaign in Florida is that the final tremendous success came as the culmination of a

sustained drive which picked up momentum as steadily increasing numbers of blind persons became actively involved. Somewhere along the line it became obvious that the only possible result of all of this would be a truly great affiliate, which was indeed the outcome.

Don Capps' visit to Miami in March of 1970 to meet with the Sunshine Chapter--Friends of the National Federation of the Blind, laid the groundwork for future statewide expansion. After his visit the Miami-based group continued to grow steadily stronger and to think in terms of a statewide organization.

Future significant developments centered around the formation of three other local chapters in October and November of this year. Each of these chapters worked toward the establishment of the State organization.

The Tallahassee Association of the Blind is an active and energetic group composed of university students and townspeople, ideally suited to the strategic role required of a chapter located in a State capital. TAB leaders include Janet Clary, Malachi Troup, and Mrs. Marie Hoover.

The Orange County Association of the Blind was formed on October 16th, and immediately shouldered the task of hosting the organizational meeting. I was much impressed with the energy and ability of this group which so competently saw to all the mechanical details associated with our meeting. They not only handled the grubby details, but included in their planning items which added real sparkle to the day--live TV coverage, presentation of

an NFB banner, and Saturday evening hospitality activities. President of the Orange County Association, Lois Mills, tells me that the real credit for this splendid job belongs to Bette French, Jackie and Lourene Gideons, Ray and Vickie Tuttle, and Dick Hogsbro.

Toward the end of October, Don and Betty Capps, along with South Carolina Federationists Marshall Tucker and Billy Potter set out to stir up some activity in Jacksonville. Their time was short, but well spent as it laid the groundwork for the formation of the Jacksonville Association of the Blind three weeks later. George Starfas, a man of real determination, is president of the JAB.

You already know something of my experience at Cape Kennedy. I had arrived there after business hours on Wednesday, November 11, and needed to be on the road back to Jacksonville, one hundred eighty miles to the north, by midafternoon on Thursday. I knew of the existence of several vending stands on the Space Center and had naively planned on driving out there and visiting with the stand operators about the Federation and plans for the new affiliate. After discovering guards at the gates who required passes and calling every NASA number listed in the phone book in an attempt to secure such a pass, I was ready to give up, having come to the conclusion that it would require an "Act of Congress" to gain admission to the Space Center. You can now understand my surprise when you literally suggested just such an "Act of Congress". Senator Jack Miller of Iowa swiftly solved my problems by phone from Washington, and minutes later NASA sent a car and driver to escort me through the Space Center vending stands.

On Friday, contingents of blind persons from throughout the State began arriving at the Angebelt Hotel in Orlando. Excitement, enthusiasm, and determination were so high that I don't recall anyone even mentioning that it was Friday the thirteenth. Tim Seward, (well known Federationist, former Administrative Assistant to Congressman Walter Baring, and Newel Perry award recipient) arrived on Friday as did Don and Betty Capps.

Don began the Saturday meeting by discussing the history, growth, and purposes of the Federation. Your taped message was truly inspiring. Tim Seward spoke about legislative accomplishments of the NFB. Leaders from each of the four local chapters reported on chapter activities and presented problems and projects of statewide concern. A lively discussion period rounded out the morning activities.

The first order of business in the afternoon session was the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers and board members.

Lois Mills of Orlando was elected president. Blind since childhood, Lois is a division manager for the Central Florida Regional Office of Westamerica Securities, Inc. She holds a master's degree in history and has formerly held positions as a high school history teacher and as a research analyst for the National Security Agency. She is active in Toastmistresses, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, and the International Association of Financial Planners. I am convinced that Lois will provide energetic and imaginative leadership.

Sam Sitt of Miami was elected first

vice president. Sam is currently employed as a darkroom technician, but soon will become a Social Security Service Representative.

Second vice president is Dr. Fareed Haj of Miami. Dr. Haj is a native of Palestine. He holds a Ph.D. in rehabilitation counseling and has done post doctoral work at Harvard and Columbia Universities. He is employed as a special education teacher.

Secretary is Janet Clary of Tallahassee. You probably remember Janet, as she has been an active Federationist for several years and was formerly secretary of the Progressive Blind of Missouri. Janet taught for several years at the Kansas School for the Visually Handicapped, prior to returning to her home State to do graduate work at Florida State University.

Treasurer is Louis Corbin, a practicing attorney in Jacksonville. Lou wanted no part in a coffee and cake outfit, but quickly realized that neither did the rest of us!

Two-year board member Bette French is a busy housewife and mother who still manages to find time to be active in community affairs. The other two-year board member is Charles Juenger of Titusville. Charlie is a vending stand operator in the Manned Spacecraft Operations Building on Kennedy Space Center. His attendance at the organizational meeting made my struggle with NASA well worth the effort. One-year board positions are filled by Malachi Troup of Tallahassee, a graduate student in social work, and by Jack Albaugh of Miami. Jack is a native of

Maryland and a retired restaurant operator. Jack is first vice president of the Miami Chapter.

That description of the Board ought to speak for itself. However, I can't resist pointing out its obvious strengths--education, diversity of background and employment experience, geographic balance.

With such a high caliber board, is it any wonder that the two top priority items discussed at the evening board meeting were passage of the Model White Cane Law and protection of the structural integrity of the State agency?

Reality dictates that this letter must end somewhere. Let me say just one more thing about our newest affiliate, the Florida Association of the Blind: WOW!

Cordially,

Mary Ellen Anderson

NFB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS

by
Perry Sundquist

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind was held in Des Moines, Iowa on November 28 and 29, 1970. For those members of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance who arrived early, a festive note was added since they were the guests of Kenneth and Anna Katherine Jernigan at a fine Thanksgiving dinner. The

Jernigans also had as their guests the Secretary of State of Iowa, the Hon. Melvin D. Synhorst, his wife and two sons. The main course at the feast (and feast it really was) was a twenty-pound fresh turkey and a two-year-old Tennessee country ham. These delicacies were enhanced with fresh golden corn, a fresh spinach casserole, candied yams, wild Greek oranges, and cornbread dressing with giblet gravy. To top it off each guest received a piece of pumpkin, mince, and pecan pie. Prior to the dinner the members of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance prepared a proposed budget for the calendar year 1971.

The Executive Committee opened at 8:30 Saturday morning and continued to 6:00 in the evening, and reconvened for a Sunday morning session. All members were present except the Treasurer, Franklin VanVliet, who was prevented from attending because of illness.

President Jernigan reported on the very healthy state of the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund and listed several bequests which the NFB has recently received. He then told of the organization of a new affiliate in Florida. Details concerning our newest affiliate are contained elsewhere in this issue of *The Monitor*. The Executive Committee voted to admit into the NFB "family" the Florida Association of the Blind.

The President was authorized to prepare the agenda for the 1971 Annual Convention in Houston, and the registration fee was increased from two dollars to three dollars to help with the heavy expenses involved in putting on a large national gathering.

While the momentum of the growth of the NFB is best shown by the increasingly large numbers who attend the national Conventions, this has brought some delightful problems, one of which is the difficulty in finding hotels large enough to accommodate our annual gathering. While the 1972 Convention site was set for Colorado, the only hotel in that State large enough to accommodate the NFB Convention is the Denver Hilton and that hostelry is booked solid for several years ahead. Consequently, the Executive Committee decided to move the 1972 Convention to Illinois, which had originally been slated to host the gathering in 1973.

The recommended budget for 1971 was discussed in detail and approved by the Executive Committee as recommended by the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, the members of which are Don Capps of South Carolina, Harold Reagan of Kentucky, and Perry Sundquist of California, chairman. It was pointed out that almost forty percent of the total budget is required to finance *The Braille Monitor's* publication in inkprint, recording discs, and Braille. *The Monitor* is now perhaps the largest magazine in its field in readers with close to 10,000 subscribers—and it is still growing!

The meetings of the Committee were held in the new offices of the NFB in Des Moines which offer adequate space for the enormous amount of materials necessary in the day-to-day operation of the organization.

The President then discussed with the Committee a detailed and over-all view of the organization. Its phenomenal growth makes it seem desirable to explore the

possibility of purchasing its own building where most of the Federation's activities can be centralized. The President was authorized to conduct such an exploration.

Since 1962 the Federation has sponsored with the U. S. State Department the program of foreign visitors each year. Those persons from the various countries around the world who seem to have a potential for leadership in the blind movement in their respective countries are sought. In order to centralize these activities, President Jernigan has created the Cultural Exchange and International Program Committee and appointed Miss Anita O'Shea of Massachusetts as its chairman. Miss O'Shea is currently the president of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts and is a member of the NFB Executive Committee. Serving on the Committee are Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant, William Dwyer, Ned Graham, Dr. Mae Davidow and, as consultant, John Nagle.

Members of the Executive Committee had much favorable comment concerning the just-published history of the National Federation of the Blind entitled "The First Thirty Years". It is hoped that this work can also be published as an insert in an early issue of *The Braille Monitor*.

President Jernigan then gave the Committee details concerning the many legal cases which the NFB has initiated to protect the rights of blind persons—students, teachers, vending stand operators, and those desiring to take civil service examinations.

The Committee then went into plans

for broadening and strengthening the NFB's special interest groups--students, teachers, lawyers, and merchants. One full day during the National Convention will probably be set aside for meetings of these groups with an enriched program for each.

The Executive Committee then discussed in detail the NFB's legislative program for the next two years in the 92nd Congress which will convene in January, 1971. Following are the decisions made:

1. Disability Insurance for the Blind Bill. This measure was approved by the Senate Finance Committee and is expected to pass the U. S. Senate during the 91st Congress. However, if it is not adopted by the House-Senate Conference Committee and enacted into law, it will again be the major legislative thrust in the 92nd Congress. It was unanimously agreed that we will persist in our efforts until the disability insurance bill becomes law.

2. Efforts will continue to be made to effect real improvements in title X of the Social Security Act, Aid to the Blind, so that the States may be enabled to make more adequate provision for their sightless citizens who are in need.

3. The organization will continue its support of measures designed to extend the benefits of the Medicare program to beneficiaries under the Disability Insurance title of the Social Security Act.

4. The organization will again press for enactment of its measures to provide minimum wages, collective bargaining, and unemployment compensation for sheltered workshop employees and will flatly oppose efforts to amend the

Wagner-O'Day Act (providing for government contracts with workshops) by extending benefits to workers other than the blind.

5. Improvements will be sought in the Vocational Rehabilitation Act whereby any Federal grants to workshops will be made contingent on making substantial improvements in the working conditions of the employees; a fair-hearing procedure to protect the rights of clients; and provision for one hundred percent Federal funding of all case services in vocational rehabilitation.

6. An effort will be made to amend the U. S. Civil Service Law to provide reader service to blind employees to be paid for from general revenues instead of the employing agency or the blind person himself.

7. Amendments will be sought to the Elementary and Secondary Education Acts to prohibit discrimination by reason of blindness or other physical impairment for employment by any local school district; and amendments to the Higher Education Act to prohibit discrimination by reason of blindness or other physical impairment for undergraduate or graduate study in any college or university.

8. A bill will be supported amending the Vocational Rehabilitation Act to provide rehabilitation services for older blind persons.

9. Enactment will be sought of a measure amending the Library Services for the blind and Physically Handicapped Act to provide Federal funds for local administration, housing, and distribution.

10. Efforts will continue to amend the Randolph-Sheppard Act to provide that vending machine funds go exclusively to the blind operators in the event S. 2461 is not passed in the present session.

When John Nagle, Chief of the NFB's Washington Office, arrived for the meetings, he really received the red carpet treatment. The Secretary of State of the State of Iowa met John at the Des Moines airport and chauffeured him down to the Savery Hotel, and on Sunday afternoon took John out to catch his return flight to Washington.

The sessions of the Executive Committee were marked not only by a spirit of unity but a realization that the leadership of the National Federation of the Blind must continue to press forward on all of its many fronts so that the organization can become increasingly helpful to blind persons everywhere.

* * * * *

CAPITAL CHAPTER CONQUERS CRISIS

by
James Doherty

It all began with a phone call from a worried parent. Afraid that her child would not be permitted to continue his education, she reached out for help and found the Federation ready and willing to join in her fight.

The first call came to John Nagle's office in Washington. Since it came from a local citizen, John immediately referred the matter to the president of the Capital

Chapter, his wife Virginia. The Nagles were packing that day to leave for the weekend, so Virginia turned the case over to Gale Conard, chairman of the chapter's Committee on Legislation. In the next few days, Gale spent a total of forty hours collecting information. Briefly stated, this is what he learned.

Twenty-five blind children from the District of Columbia have been attending the Maryland School for the Blind. Cost per student at Maryland is \$5,400 for the current school year. Last June, the D.C. school administration set a limit of \$4,000 on tuition payments for handicapped students going outside the District. However, the Maryland school had been told that this ceiling probably would not apply to the blind students. Then, on August 27, some District school official ruled that the ceiling would indeed apply. This meant that, ten days before school was to open, Maryland had to tell the parents of the twenty-five students that their children could not go to school. But the parents appealed the decision to the District School Board, and Maryland accepted the students for one month. A letter from the Maryland superintendent urging immediate action on the appeal went unacknowledged. On September 29, he phoned the District Superintendent of Schools and was asked to grant a two-week extension, to give the school board more time to consider the appeal. The extension was granted, making October 16 possibly the last day of school for the twenty-five children.

The Capital Chapter's regular meeting was held on October 6. Gale presented the case and outlined his immediate plan. The first need was to contact school board members and administration officials, to

acquaint them with the crisis nature of the situation and urge them to do whatever necessary to keep the children in school.

Wednesday, October 7:-From early morning to late afternoon, Federationists kept phones ringing all over Washington. The first callers received the usual oily, "Thank you for your interest. We are aware of the situation and are working on it." It was quickly evident that the board members, even those supposedly considering the parents' appeal, were woefully ignorant of the facts and incredibly unconcerned. By late afternoon, callers who were able to get through were met with frigidity, if not hostility—but the message was getting through. At the same time, Gale's summary of the case was distributed to the Washington newspapers, the city council, and members of Congress who handle D.C. legislation.

Thursday, October 8: The District's three daily papers and an all-news radio station carried the story. The telephone campaign continued, though on a less intense schedule. In one significant conversation, the Assistant Superintendent of District Schools told chapter member Alex Zazow that some of the children would probably be taken into the D. C. Special Education Program and the rest remain at Maryland. This solution, discussed at the chapter meeting and mentioned once by a member of the Special Education staff, could easily have been considered and acted upon as much as one year earlier, when Maryland first informed the District of the new tuition rate.

Friday, October 9: We learned that the twenty-five students would be coming

by chartered bus to spend the weekend with their parents. Even though the bus arrived one hour earlier than expected, several Federationists were there to meet students and parents and let them know that we were with them. The parents told of two upcoming meetings: one next day with a staff member of Washington's Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind and one Monday with the Special Education people. Chapter members gave the parents copies of the *Evening Star's* article on the case and several key phone numbers, urging them to keep in touch. Still no definite word on the fate of the students.

Saturday, October 10: Twelve Federationists and six parents showed up for the meeting with the Lighthouse representative. The case was thoroughly discussed, and the chapter's concern and determination were made obvious to all. Incidentally, before the meeting, the parents were told secretly by someone from the Lighthouse that the NFB is just a bunch of militants with chips on their shoulders and should not be listened to. Happily, this advice went unheeded.

Monday, October 12: We anticipated (and received) a cold reception from the Special Education staff, so only three chapter members attended the meeting. Actually, they spoke with the parents before the conference and with school officials afterward, but were not invited into the meeting. It was clear that no decision on the children's future had yet been made. That afternoon, Gale's constant vigilance turned up news of a school board meeting set for that evening. With but two hours' notice, ten Federationists came out—only to learn that the meeting was actually that of a three-member subcommittee, called to

discuss the powers and responsibilities of the new Superintendent of Schools. However, since chapter members outnumbered D. C. citizens present, the subcommittee chairman spoke briefly about the case, saying that a closed meeting of the full board the previous Thursday had referred the matter to the Superintendent of Schools for action *within the next few weeks*. We immediately left the meeting, checked with the Maryland School Superintendent (who said he had had no contact with the District since September 29), and drafted a note to the chairman correcting some of his statements and emphasizing the fact that the children could not wait a *few weeks*. When we returned, we learned that the newly appointed Superintendent of Schools was present. At the close of the meeting, the subcommittee chairman read our note and thanked us for the corrections. The other two board members commented on the case. One was apparently becoming concerned, but the other showed that all efforts to get through to him had been in vain. His sermonizing touched off a brief verbal confrontation with several members of our group. When calm was restored, we asked that the new Superintendent of Schools, who had spoken at length during the meeting, give us a statement on the situation. In response, he signaled to the chairman to cover for him and remained silent. At this point, we decided that if nothing concrete had been done to save the children by the next afternoon we would have to take more drastic action. Tactics considered ranged from a mass synchronized phone-in to the Superintendent's office to tie up all his lines until he acted to a sit-in in his office.

Tuesday, October 13, Decision Day:

Capital Chapter vice-president Tom Bickford reached the Assistant Superintendent of Schools around noon and was told that a letter was being sent to the Maryland School, stating that seven children would be accepted by the D.C. Special Education Program, leaving eighteen at the School. The Assistant Superintendent later repeated this statement to John Nagle and to a *Washington Post* reporter. It was confirmed next day by the Maryland Superintendent's office. We could relax for the time being.

But the victory could not be considered complete. The twenty-five students had been sent to Maryland in the first place because D.C. was not equipped to educate them. We still wonder—and intend to find out—what kind of schooling those seven will receive. As a first step in that direction, Virginia Nagle and three other chapter members met Wednesday, October 14, with the Associate Superintendent of Schools for Special Education. The appointment had originally been made to press for action in the crisis, but it served now as the place to begin our new action. The Associate Superintendent said he would try to get the Capital Chapter represented on the Advisory Committee on Special Education and also on a task force being named by the new Superintendent of Schools to investigate the Special Education situation in the District. In addition, the chapter has established permanent contact with the parents of the blind students. The parents themselves are forming their own association, and some are joining the Federation.

You who read *The Monitor* can help us with one project. The chairman of the

subcommittee whose meeting we attended told us later that the Associate Superintendent for Special Education had retired and suggested that the chapter help to find a replacement. The job pays \$30,000 per year and includes work with blind, deaf, and otherwise physically handicapped students, as well as with the mentally retarded. Anyone interested in applying or who knows of someone who might be should contact our president, Virginia Nagle, 4404 Ridge Street, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015.

The reactions of school board members and administration officials showed clearly that, without the intervention of the Capital Chapter, nothing would have been done to provide uninterrupted education for the twenty-five blind children. During the week of crisis, the Nagle's house resembled the Pentagon at the height of a war emergency. Everyone agrees that Virginia's choice of Gale Conard as "crisis action coordinator" was a wise one. His direction, which John describes as magnificent, welded the many activities of other chapter members into a solid front that forcefully demonstrated the Federation's power. This was the most desperate problem the Capital Chapter has yet been called upon to solve. We are all unashamedly proud to say that we responded in true NFB fashion.

WEST VIRGINIA CONVENTION
by
C. Edgar McDonald

The year 1970 has been a big year in

the eastern West Virginia town of Romney, because it has marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. The schools invited the West Virginia Federation of the Blind to join in their festivities by holding its 1970 convention on the Romney campus.

The Alumni Association of the School for the Blind, one of nine affiliates of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind, served as host for the convention which was held the weekend of August 14-16. More than one hundred thirty persons registered for the entire weekend, and one hundred fifty-nine attended the Saturday-night banquet, establishing an all-time attendance record for the seventeen-year history of WVFB.

At the opening business session on Saturday morning, members of the organization were welcomed by Edgar Baker, mayor of the town of Romney; Eldon E. Shipman, superintendent of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind; and Thomas Workman, a teacher at the School for the Blind and the recently-elected president of the Alumni Association.

The featured speaker at this year's banquet was West Virginia State Senator E. Hans McCourt of Webster Springs. Senator McCourt, chairman of the State Senate Finance Committee, told the group that he would continue to give serious consideration to any piece of legislation introduced or supported in the State Legislature by the West Virginia Federation of the Blind. He offered high praise for WVFB and for what he termed "its many dedicated members who can get things done."

John Taylor, Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, was on hand to represent the National Federation of the Blind. In his brief banquet remarks Taylor urged all members of the group to continue striving toward full equality for the blind in educational opportunities and in the over-all labor market. He said that some persons often become annoyed by the persistence and determination of the blind to achieve such equality. "The only way to avoid producing such annoyance," Taylor said, "would be for every blind person to remain at home in his rocking chair."

T. S. Funk, Director of the West Virginia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, along with several members of the rehabilitation staff, brought greetings from the department and talked with Federation members about rehabilitation services. The organization paid special recognition to E. M. Ashworth who recently retired as Chief of Services for the Deaf and the Blind of the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Other guests at the convention included Donald S. Pruitt of Covington, Kentucky, a 1951 graduate of the West Virginia School for the Blind, who brought greetings from the Kentucky Federation of the Blind, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert McDonald of Alexandria, Virginia, who extended greetings from the Virginia Federation.

Robert L. Hunt of Buckhannon was elected to his fourth term as WVFB president. Hunt, a 1944 graduate of the West Virginia School for the Blind, is a professor of history at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Other officers elected

for the coming year were Alva Huffman of Charleston, first vice president; Guy Parks of Clarksburg, second vice president; Paul A. Hughes of Wheeling, secretary; Mrs. Evelyn Milhorn of Wheeling, financial secretary; E. Sid Allen of Huntington, treasurer; Harry Highland of Parkersburg, chaplain. President Hunt was elected to serve as delegate to the 1971 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind, and E. Sid Allen was chosen as alternate delegate.

Two scholarship awards were presented during the banquet program to two West Virginia blind students who plan to enter college in the fall. The annual C. Cerone Scholarship Award of \$100 was presented to Miss Donna L. Cottrell, eighteen, of Charleston. Miss Cottrell, a 1970 graduate of Dunbar High School, has been accepted for the fall semester at West Virginia State College where she plans to major in the field of law enforcement. The award is given in memory of the late C. C. Cerone, co-founder of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind and president of the organization from 1956 until 1964.

The first annual Jacobus tenBroek Scholarship award of one hundred dollars went to Marvin C. Whiteman, eighteen, of Wellsburg. Whiteman graduated from Brooke High School and plans to major in modern languages at West Virginia University. This award, given in memory of the founder of the NFB, was created by a resolution passed during the 1969 convention of the West Virginia Federation. Under a resolution approved during this year's convention, both the Cerone and tenBroek scholarships will be increased to one hundred fifty dollars each, beginning in 1971.

In another resolution, WVFB gave its support to the "Little Randolph-Sheppard Act," which will be introduced into the West Virginia Legislature in January of next year. This Act would provide that members of the West Virginia Society for the Blind and Severely Disabled be given first consideration in the establishment of vending stands and food service facilities in all State, county, and municipal buildings.

Jack W. Sprinkle, a 1950 graduate of the West Virginia School for the Blind, was named 1970 Federationist of the Year. In June of this year, Sprinkle stepped down after four years as president of the Alumni Association of the School for the Blind. During those four years he brought about a considerable increase in membership and activity in the association. He was especially active and creative in planning the association's participation in this year's centennial observance at the school. Sprinkle is a self-employed piano tuner and technician in Arlington, Virginia.

This year's twenty-five-dollar Charles Monfradi Award, given to the affiliate having achieved the greatest membership increase during the past year, went to the Alumni Association of the West Virginia School for the Blind.

The 1970 WVFB "Year Book" was dedicated to Miss Fannie K. Cookus and to Miss Mary R. Painter, retired housemothers at the School for the Blind. Both Miss Cookus and Miss Painter were seated at the speakers' table during the convention banquet.

Many useful items were donated by each affiliate and by various business firms

in the greater Romney area to be given as prizes during the convention. They were awarded to persons whose names were drawn at random during each business session. These prizes included several articles hand-made by students at the School for the Blind.

On both Friday and Saturday night during the convention, an informal reception was held in the school auditorium. Rather than the usual entertainment by a local band, several members of the organization enjoyed providing their own musical entertainment using piano, guitar, bass, and other instruments.

The Four-County Federation of the Blind, youngest affiliate of the West Virginia Federation, will host the 1971 convention to be held in either Bluefield or Princeton.

It was unanimously agreed that the 1970 WVFB convention was a complete success, and everyone anticipates even greater achievements in the Mountain State during the coming year.

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A LADY ANSWERS THE GOVERNOR

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted from *The Council Bulletin*, publication of the California Council of the Blind.]

140 Dolores Street, Apt. 307
San Francisco, California 94103

Hon. Ronald Reagan
Governor of California

Sacramento, California

Dear Governor Reagan:

I would like to vigorously protest some grossly misleading statements you made in your press conference concerning the blind and Aid to the Blind. (I've enclosed a copy of the *Examiner* article to refresh your memory).

First, I seriously doubt your doctor could have meant it if he said that you qualify as "legally blind." This State's definition of legally blind is the same as the Federal standard—20/200 or less in the better eye *with* corrective lenses.

My second and most important point is this: Even if you were legally blind you would not automatically qualify for Blind Aid as your statement implies. Aid for the blind and other handicapped people works on the same principle as welfare. It is granted only to those who are not gainfully employed and have no means of support. I'm sure you don't qualify on either point. I am astounded that a man in your position does not already know this.

Your careless misinformation to the press was incalculably damaging to the image of the blind. First, for making it seem as if people can be declared legally blind who are not truly handicapped. Secondly, for the erroneous impression that just by being classified as legally blind, one automatically qualifies for Aid. Unfortunately, some of the public resentfully believe that all blind people receive State or Federal funds, regardless of their financial status. Your misleading remarks have perpetuated this fallacy. I think you owe all Californians an explanation.

I also got the impression that you considered all of this quite funny. Please be assured, Governor Reagan, that if the day ever comes that your doctor truly tells you you're blind, you won't feel like laughing.

I am informed on this subject because my husband is blind. Although he is presently unemployed, he is not collecting Aid to the Blind because he doesn't qualify financially. I'm steadily employed and earn enough to support both of us.

If you'd like to get blind and other handicapped people off the California welfare rolls, here's some advice. Find them jobs. Nothing would make my husband (and thousands of others like him) happier than to be gainfully employed and paying taxes along with everyone else.

While I'm on this subject, the cutback in State funds for the Vocational Rehabilitation Service was a wasteful step backward. Instead, California badly needs a separate Commission for the Blind in the rehabilitation division, staffed with specialists who will knock on Industry's doors and seek out jobs for the blind. This would eventually pay off for all taxpayers. Remember, the more Working Blind, the fewer Welfare Blind.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Virginia Grasso

A SIGNIFICANT POST OFFICE REVERSAL

In a landmark decision, the Postal Service has ruled that sound recordings for the blind of current printed news are entitled to the same expeditious delivery as newspapers. The ruling represents an exception to postal provisions stating that Free Matter for the Blind is not entitled to preferential mailing treatment without prepayment of fees for the service. The Postal Service had withdrawn newspaper treatment accorded to *Newsweek Talking Magazine* on grounds that it did not qualify as second class mail (newspapers and periodicals). One of the criteria for a publication's entry as second class mail is that it consist of "printed sheets." Postmaster General Winton M. Blount said, however, it is in the public interest to permit prompt delivery of the "talking magazine" as second class mail since its contents are, in a sense, perishable with the passage of time.

"The conscience of the public dictates that our visually handicapped citizens not be denied the privilege of keeping abreast of ever-changing news and events through the use of sound recordings and other devices," Mr. Blount said. Accordingly, the Postmaster General ordered that expeditious handling be given to sound recordings for the blind when they are regularly issued as reproductions of printed material which is entered as second class matter and which itself is given "newspaper treatment."

Why this significant reversal of post office regulations? Certainly one of the factors was the forthright action taken by a blind lawyer in Sioux City, Iowa, Frank

P. Whicher, who is obviously both a doer and a mover. In response to a letter from the editor of *The Monitor*, Mr. Whicher wrote: "Rather than tell you how I became involved in the *Newsweek* fiasco, I simply enclose copies of the letters I wrote in connection with it and you can take it from there. I was sure that others were taking similar action and was made aware of it when the whole thing was done and I heard from the American Printing House for the Blind." Following are the letters referred to:

*Hon. Richard M. Nixon
President of the United States
White House
Washington, D. C.*

My dear Mr. President:

I am blind. This condition in the eyes of many people makes me a somewhat retarded individual whose wants and needs are not equal to those of sighted people.

Such, I believe, is the view of some individual or group of individuals in the Post Office Department who recently decreed that the talking book issue of Newsweek should no longer be given newspaper handling. As a result of this decree from on high, I received my Newsweek record several days later in the week than I did before.

Now, Mr. President, we retarded, blind people for some peculiar reason prefer not to have our news stale. In this regard, I wonder if we may not be like our sighted friends.

Would the momentous decision made by some master-minds be an act of discrimination?

Respectfully,

Frank P. Whicher

October 1, 1970

Earl L. Ellis, Acting Director
Domestic Mail Classification Division
Post Office Department
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Mr. Ellis:

Re: Newsweek mailing (MCO:mer)

Your letter of September 15 in response to my earlier letter to the President so irritated me I felt it best not to answer immediately. I find that when I am exercised my letters can become quite abrasive, hence less effective than they might otherwise be. Thus I concluded that since I was going on a fishing trip anyway, best I let the matter rest and see how I felt upon my return. Suffice it to say that my luck was good, my companions companionable, the "beverages enlivening", and the Canadian weather invigorating. Hence I'm in better spirits on my return.

This enables me to make a point: too many sighted people are imbued with the belief that blind folks aren't people, just lumps of flesh that must be catered to, waited upon and shoved into the corner, there to vegetate like a pregnant woman in her ninth month. The fact is, that, with some exceptions, blind people have the same feelings, urges, desires, needs, wants, and requirements that are for those who have the use of their eyes. Up to this point has it occurred to you and those who

made the decision about which I complained that a blind man might go fishing as I did, and have on several occasions? I doubt it. This is but an example and I choose to burden you with it no more.

Now to be specific: the Post Office Department gives newspaper handling to certain types of newspapers for the sole purpose of allowing the readers of those papers to receive them at the earliest possible moment. Newsweek is the only publication containing reasonably recent news and editorial work made available to the blind. True, the spouses or friends of blind people can read the daily papers to them as does my wife, but it is asking too much of her to read much more than that. Her voice ultimately gives out, and she does have other things to do. I want my news and editorial comment hot off the griddle, and until recently I was getting it that way. However, since the ruling that it shall no longer receive newspaper handling was made effective, it generally is about a week late and stale.

I earnestly hope that the Post Office Department will reconsider this ruling mindful of the fact that sightless folk are just people after all.

Very truly yours,

Frank Whicher

In response to our request for personal data, Mr. Whicher writes:

I was born March 31, 1910 in Red Lodge, Montana. My father was a lawyer who moved his family to Sioux City when

I was sixteen years of age. I graduated from high school in 1928 and drove a truck for a couple of years, sold real silk hosiery a year before settling down in my father's office to study law under him. I was admitted to practice law in 1934. My brother, ten years my junior, is my partner. My specialty in the field of law is bankruptcy and commercial practice.

I married my wife, Kay--a lass of Irish extraction--in 1934 and we have six daughters. Five of them now married and the youngest attending Drake University as a freshman. We have eight grandchildren and presume there are many more to come.

I was quite suddenly blinded a year ago as a result of acute glaucoma, and assumed that my practice would quickly and substantially diminish. To my joy and astonishment such has not been the case, and to add to that, last June the local bar for the fourth time designated me as its representative for another two-year term as a member of the Board of Governors of the Iowa Bar Association.

I am a 33rd Degree Mason, a member of the Commandry and a Shriner. For twenty-five years I have, and still do, sing with the local Shrine Chanters.

It may be of interest that I have for many years done considerable ritualistic work in the Scottish Rite and the Shrine. I still continue with that work, enjoy it and the boys seem to want me to continue.

I assume that you wondered how I missed mentioning the colleges and universities I attended. Suffice it to say I have never been in a college except as a guest, and usually that was to attend the

graduation ceremonies of my several daughters. I am one of a dying breed for I believe it is no longer possible for a lawyer to become such except through college and university training. Prior to a year ago my hobbies were fishing and standing on street corners on windy days. Now it's just fishing.

Our hat is off to you, Frank Whicher!
May your tribe increase!

BIG BROTHER STILL STALKS THE ILLINOIS CAMPUS

by
Loren Schmitt

[Editor's Note: Readers of the April, 1970 issue of *The Braille Monitor* will recall an article entitled "Big Brother on the Illinois Campus" by Ed Sheppard, detailing the courageous actions of Loren Schmitt, a blind graduate student at the University of Illinois, in combatting the University's rehabilitation center and program. Recently Mr. Schmitt took his case, and that of other disabled students, before the Graduate Student Association, protesting the custodial attitude of the center toward disabled students, thus reducing their effectiveness in competing in the job market. Schmitt charges that the rehabilitation center and staff have deprived disabled students of self-determination in such areas as housing and even class enrollment. Following is Loren's analysis of the current events on the Illinois campus:]

On Thursday, September 24, I met and conferred with the chairman of the Graduate Student Association (graduate level student organization) concerning the status of blind students on this campus. At that time, he seemed receptive to the positive philosophy of integration and equality espoused by our movement. He and I agreed that I should appear before the GSA Executive Committee.

On Tuesday, October 1, I addressed the Executive Committee (presenting a succinct position paper) and requested that they officially support a proposal that the University rescind its present policy giving DRES control over the admission of disabled students. Several of the committee members raised vacuous questions about whether or not the rehab center could perform any useful functions for disabled students. One member offered the inane observation that rehab officials are imbued with good motives and desire independence for us as soon as possible.

The committee never voted on the proposal. Instead, they opted for the standard liberal cop-out of a resolution calling for the establishment of a committee to study the issues.

In retrospect, I think they believed my testimony about the extent of control exercised by rehab over the lives of disabled students on this campus. However, they shared in the elitism characteristic of the system and failed to take action against custodialism. I lament their lack of intellectual honesty, their unwillingness to confront the issues directly and either approve or reject our proposal.

CALIFORNIA CONVENTION

by
Lynda Bardis

During the weekend of October 16-18, members and friends of the California Council of the Blind gathered at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood for the Fall convention. As always during the opening hours of a convention, the lobbies and corridors of the hotel were filled with the pleasant sounds of greetings between old friends anticipating a productive and enjoyable time. With elections due to be held on Sunday and several positions on the Executive Committee open, the salutations were not without political tones. Campaigning was fairly moderate, however, despite the number of dogs to pet and babies to kiss.

White Cane Week and Fundraising Committee, Credentials Committee, and Resolutions Committee meetings took place on schedule Friday evening. In the WCWFR Committee meeting, Council president Tony Mannino encouraged chapters to participate vigorously in this year's candy sale. With money tight, Council members must work harder to make sure that the important work of the self-determining blind can continue. Resolutions Committee, chaired by Al Gil, was lively--what else--noisy, and productive. This meeting, open to everyone, is always one of the most interesting parts of the convention because this is where ideas are presented from all Council members. When adopted by the assembly on Sunday, these resolutions became Council policy. Among the resolutions discussed this time were a proposal to urge the State to carry

insurance on all blind trainees for employment, a rejection of the mandatory Driver Education classes for high school students, a directive to the Council to seek legislation requiring landlords to rent to blind people with dogs even when animals are not otherwise allowed, and a suggestion that the Council support legislation concerning child care facilities for low-income working mothers.

Saturday's agenda had much to offer in the way of good times and valuable information. Mr. Donald Welch, Program Coordinator for the East San Gabriel Valley School for the Multihandicapped, presented a very interesting description of his work with multihandicapped children. He talked specifically about the deaf-blind ones, saying that he and his staff are really experimenting in finding ways to reach these children. Some of the children reject any and all external stimuli. Some are nearly catatonic when they reach his school. Many have never walked or played though they may be five or six years old. He described various methods of entering the worlds of these children and teaching them about language and other means of rapport between human beings. Hearing him describe the plight of the children and their families who have almost no facilities to serve them--no schools, no rehabilitation programs, no guarantee that the children will be able to continue what education they can find here and there--renewed the frustration and anger felt by those of us who heard legislators deplore the fate of the multihandicapped without being willing to spend a penny to improve it.

Most of Saturday afternoon's program was filled with Frances Thiesen who told of her work with deaf-blind

adults. She demonstrated the use of some fascinating aparati, including a telephone that can be used by a deaf person and Morse Code oscillators which are also used by the deaf. Several of Miss Thiesen's deaf-blind friends had come with her to help acquaint us with the problems and the abilities of the deaf-blind.

The biggest hit of the day was made by the littlest guy there, Mr. Billy Mardy, movie star, TV personality, and representative of the Little People of America, Inc. Having been in show business for years, Mr. Mardy knew how to make his talk immensely entertaining. He scintillated charmingly, endearing himself to all. His presentation was as enlightening as it was jocular. He told us midgets and dwarfs are just normal people who happen to be short. (Sound familiar?) They have the same needs, the same range of abilities as everyone else. They must, however, adapt their methods of doing certain things--driving cars, pushing elevator buttons for example--in order to survive and compete in society. The similarity of problems faced by little people and blind people was striking. Little people fight job discrimination, insurance difficulties, public accommodations which don't accommodate them, stigma, misconceptions, and alienation from society. Their organization, Little People of America, is structured somewhat like the National Federation of the Blind, having State affiliates and local chapters. They have not as yet entered the legislative arena to achieve their goals, but Mr. Mardy said that they are considering this approach.

Upon adjournment, students, CIB workers, and Vending Stand operators held meetings to discuss events that have

affected their groups since the last convention. Students discussed various means by which they might participate more fully in the work of the Council, especially in their own communities. CIB workers grappled with the problem of how to save the Industries from total ruin due to present management--or mismanagement--by the Department of Rehabilitation. The Vending Stand operators worked with some creative ideas for improving the BEP. These ideas will be presented as proposals to the Department of Rehabilitation and/or to the Legislature.

The day's business accomplished, the hour had arrived for relaxation and the pursuit of the company of friends. The banquet fare was particularly tasty--steak and asparagus yet--and the speech following particularly nice. Mr. Perry Sundquist, editor of *The Braille Monitor* and long-standing member of the Council, reviewed for us the history of the blind movement. It was good for the many newcomers among us to learn of the origins of our organizations and for the rest to hear the story told in Perry's simple and eloquent style.

The principal activity Sunday morning was the discussion and voting upon resolutions. A dozen or so resolutions were adopted in an unusually calm session. Very few of the resolutions were controversial. Copies of the resolutions are available upon request from the office of the president.

The elections resulted in the following slate of officers: president, Tony Mannino; first vice president, Muzzy Marcelino; second vice president, Al Gil; secretary, Jerrold Drake; treasurer, Charles

Smalley; executive committee members, Perry Sundquist, Sybil Westbrook, Allen Jenkins, and Dorothy Datter.

Sunday's program also presented reports on Council legislation, National Federation legislation, and progress in the International Federation of the Blind. Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant urged Council members to take an aggressive interest in the problems and progress of the IFB by contributing materials, funds, and personal involvement.

ORIENTATION--BUT FOR WHAT?

[Editor's Note: The following appeared in a recent issue of *The Newsletter* of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan.]

On September 17, approximately three hundred people gathered in Kalamazoo for the dedication of the Michigan Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. R. Bernard Houston, director of the Michigan Department of Social Services, was master of ceremonies. Other program participants included Robert Wisner, superintendent of the new center; the Honorable Robert D. Mahoney, State representative from the sixth district; and Roy Kumpe, director of the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, who presented the keynote address.

It was a happy occasion, for Michigan has long needed the orientation center. There was much talk of a dream come true, of Michigan becoming a pioneer as a result of providing this facility, and of

hope that the center presents for the State's blind citizens.

A closer examination of what was said, however, reveals that rather than the pioneering vision of blind people as basically normal people for whom loss of sight is a physical nuisance, we have the unquestioned acceptance of the same old myths and stereotypes of blind people who, by virtue of blindness, are in peculiar need of psychiatric and diagnostic services--in short, clinical analysis. Emphasis on such procedures of rehabilitation only serve to convince a blind person of the thing that society has already taught him: blindness means helplessness--physical, mental, and emotional.

Mr. Kumpe's examples of the kinds of people the center will serve, illustrate the point. Let us look at two of them. The first was a junior in electrical engineering when he lost his sight. He was told, of course, that a blind man could not continue in this career and is now in the insurance business. The fact that he is doing well ignores the fact that he had to make the change because it was assumed that a blind man could not do the work. That there are two blind electrical engineers in Iowa illustrates how misconceptions about blindness can result in an unnecessary career change and a reinforcement of the limiting nature of blindness. The second example is a blind man who was frustrated over job discrimination. He was classified as multihandicapped because he had developed emotional problems. Though he needed mobility training, does it never occur to the rehabilitation experts that the problems of job discrimination are not the prerogative of the psychologists to solve;

but rather, the obligation of agencies for the blind and the blind themselves to solve through the breaking down of society's misconceptions about blindness which lie at the root of most problems for blind people?

As stated earlier, the speakers emphasized that our new center is a place of hope. Indeed, the experience and accomplishments at such centers as that in Des Moines demonstrate how much our own blind citizens might expect in the future. One wonders, however, just how much can be expected in a place where the main emphasis is on psychological evaluations rather than gaining confidence in alternative techniques through practical experience with normal activities assumed out of reach for the blind person. Even then, only half the job is done unless there is a constant striving to break down the misconceptions about blindness which constitute the major obstacle to full integration of the blind into the community. We do, therefore, call upon all services for the blind in Michigan to join us and really to become pioneers by meeting this challenge.

MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--
NELLIE HARGROVE
AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--
TENNESSEE

My parents were direct descendants of the original settlers of the Smoky Mountain region of East Tennessee, and I was born in the foothills of the Great Smokies. That makes me a genuine Tennessee hillbilly I suppose. I grew up on

a farm and was never excused from doing my share of the chores because of my visual handicap.

My father, a country preacher who was blind, insisted that I go to the residential school for the blind in Nashville when I was ten years old. I, of course, thought at the time that he was being very cruel to me. I did not want to be away from my family. Looking back, I now realize how fortunate I was to have had a father so wise.

My sighted brother and sister have always said that I received a far better education at the Tennessee School for the Blind than they did in the public schools. I am very certain that they are right. I consider the training and guidance at the school for the blind my greatest asset.

After high school, I attended Nashville College of Business for eighteen months and went directly from business college to work. I am currently employed in the Tennessee Department of Public Works, where I have been for the past twelve years.

Beside full time employment and my work with the NFB movement, I have remained active in local civic, political, and religious groups. I still find time for various social and recreational activities.

Being the mother of a teenage daughter is a real challenge to me. I have a



terrible fear of being called a "square", so I sometimes romp about the lawn of our suburban home with Elaine and our two dogs when I would really like to be slumped in an easy chair with a good book.

The NFB of Tennessee was organized on June 7, 1969. We had one hundred and seventeen charter members. We now have over three hundred. Basically, we did not organize as a group of blind people to oppose the existing organizations of the blind in this State. Neither did we organize to openly oppose the agency of services to the blind as it now exists. We organized because we, as blind citizens of Tennessee, wanted to combine our efforts in opposing the prejudice, lack of economic opportunity, denial of social acceptance, and public misconceptions which face the blind of this State. We felt a strong need to be affiliated with a powerful national organization and we knew from our observance of NFB and its activities that it was such an organization.

We have two local chapters in Tennessee: the Middle Tennessee Chapter, and the Memphis Federation of the Blind. We also have members at large throughout the State. No blind person in Tennessee is denied membership in NFB of Tennessee because of race, color, or creed. We are exceedingly proud of the fact that the problems which concern the blind have held us closely together and race has in no

way separated us

Tennessee was the first State to attempt the sale of the automobile sticker as a fundraising project. We were successful with our sticker sales. Some other States have not done well with it. We have also been very successful with the presentation of benefit shows sponsored by the organization. The Tennessee affiliate is self-supporting and has contributed to the IFB and to the NFB Endowment Fund.

At our first annual State convention, May 1-3, we had outstanding attendance. One hundred and forty attended the banquet. The board of directors adopted resolutions establishing an annual scholarship award and a "Federationist of the Year" award. Members of the Tennessee affiliate have appeared on local radio and TV stations in an effort to inform the public as to the existence and functions of the organization.

We have a quarterly news bulletin, *The Volunteer State News*. The first edition came out September 25, 1970. We have plans to increase the circulation of our bulletin

Last year, a legislative committee worked long and diligently preparing a bill to establish a commission for the blind in Tennessee. We did not feel that presentation of the bill in 1970 was wise. In the past months, Lev Williams, chairman of the legislative committee has appeared before civic groups, private citizens, and law-makers soliciting support for our legislation.

Our plans for the coming months are to work for the passage of a good

legislative program, increase our membership, and make a greater showing on the national level by doing such things as sending a large delegation to the NFB Convention in Houston.

We are indeed proud of our accomplishments in the past year and a half but we are deeply concerned that we have not accomplished more. However, we look forward with optimism to a future of growth and progress!

DECISION IN DELAWARE

Separate administrative agencies for the blind all over the country are in jeopardy, as *Monitor* readers know. When reorganization and fragmentation of services to the blind are combined with poor administration, the blind are in trouble. Delaware is one of the recent victims of reorganization in the name of administrative convenience with no thought, or at least not much, about what is going to happen to the blind client of aid and services.

As succinctly put by NFB President Kenneth Jernigan in his article on "The Separate Agency for the Blind—Why and Where" [see *The Braille Monitor* for July 1970] the situation in Delaware could almost be used as a model for what is happening throughout the country. *The State has had an independent commission for the blind for many years, answerable only to the Governor and the Legislature. Programs for the blind have been a single entity, and (even though the blind have often felt that services were inadequate)*

responsibility for problems could be focused and interaction with administrators achieved. Each year the blind had the opportunity to try to get some of their own representatives on the commission's board. The full time of administrators and staff was devoted to affairs of the blind.

Such is the case no more. Delaware no longer has an independent commission, and the blind of the State are likely to have fewer opportunities as a result. On March 16, 1970, Governor Russell Peterson signed the State Reorganization Bill, which he had made a campaign issue and which he pushed through the Legislature. It creates the cabinet form of State Administration.

The previously autonomous commission for the blind became the Council for the Blind, one of four councils in the Division of Social Services of the Department of Health and Welfare. Formerly, the members of the commission had full administrative authority to run the Commission for the Blind. Under the new arrangement, the commissioners become mere advisors with only the authority to recommend. The director of the Council of the Blind [currently Howard Jones] now reports to the Chief of the Division of Social Services who in turn reports to the Director of the Department of Health and Welfare.

The Director of the Department of Health and Welfare could, without a hearing, and despite any objections from the new Council of the Blind, transfer aid to the blind administration, for instance, to the Council on Public Assistance; or vocational rehabilitation for the blind to general rehabilitation and otherwise

fragment the existing administrative entities in his department. Almost immediately, personnel and fiscal matters were removed from the Council for the Blind and pooled with other statewide administrative agencies.

In May the Wilmington, Delaware *Evening Journal* published the findings of the State Auditor, George W. Cripps, which dealt with irregularities and discrepancies of the management, personnel and fiscal, of the vending stand program operated by Delaware's Bureau for the Blind. A former employee of the Commission, Sebastian Demanop, who is now a senior rehabilitation counselor in Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Evening Journal* congratulating him on making the report public. He then goes on to say: *I can assure you that these discrepancies and irregularities would not have occurred before 1965 when the program was under the management and supervision of William H. Hathaway.*

I urge that the State auditor continue with the investigation for I am sure that he will learn a great deal as he continues the probe. Other programs deserve some attention.

Since I was employed by that agency for almost eight years, I maintain an interest in its activities. In 1964, prior to my resignation from the agency, I attempted to call the attention of one of the commissioners to the defects, but to no avail.

The Delaware Commissioners didn't take such a public communication of its difficulties too kindly. It is understood that the Delaware agency contacted the Pennsylvania agency about the matter.

The change in administration and the auditor's report combined to awaken interest in the general public in State programs for the blind and gave the blind of the State impetus to speak out. Many facts and facets of the programs were brought out in a series of articles written by Social Services Editor Charles P. Wilson of the Wilmington *Evening Journal* during September 1970. The series contained charges and defenses, investigations and interviews, all published at length.

The auditor's report revealed a number of weaknesses inherent in a vending stand program in which the State "hires" and "pays" the operators. No independence is fostered and the income from all is pooled and equally distributed. Stand records are almost nonexistent, and discrepancies between what records the operators kept and what the commission books show are numerous. Three Braille cash registers, purchased at a cost to the blind programs of \$900 each, were not in use--because the operators could not read Braille! Last year the blind operators averaged salaries of \$6594 each--with the more profitable stands carrying poor ones. It was charged that a number of poor locations were operated because that was one way in which the Council for the Blind could close some cases as "rehabilitated". Joseph Spence, president of the NFB affiliate, the Delaware Federation of the Blind, feels that the present system hinders the initiative of operators to do a better job. The commentary implicit in these facts, but not stated outright, is that the conditions of the stands and the training of the operators indicates that the vending stand program as it now exists is, to understate the condition, inadequate. During 1969 the twenty-three vending stands grossed

total receipts of almost one million dollars, half of which went back to the employees. There are twenty-five blind managers and fifty-five sighted employees in these vending stands. Some quick arithmetic, given the \$6594 "paid" but not necessarily earned at the stands, indicates that the difference between what was divided between the blind and the sighted employees was very slight.

The workshop run by the Commission and the current administration is no worse than many around the country. Workers complain that there is not enough work to keep them off the aid rolls, that the training is inadequate to enable them to get jobs on their own, and that management does not do anything about getting more contracts or updating equipment. They complained also about their wage rate which is well below the national minimum. The workshop operates under an "Exemption Certificate" from the Wages and Hours Division of U. S. Department of Labor, which permits less than the minimum wage to "trainees" and those so handicapped that they cannot compete in regular industry. But Delaware has a minimum wage rate of its own and no one has bothered to file for exemption from that. When management is untrained and uninterested the blind are pushed into the ditch.

Mr. Wilson points out that it costs almost twice as much for a blind client to be rehabilitated in Delaware as it does anywhere else. It was impossible to find out what jobs blind people are holding, whether "employees" in the workshop are considered rehabilitants, or whether there are any successful rehabilitations at all. The Bureau refused to furnish lists or any

information on the subject. Since the Bureau also points with pride to a number of facilities and programs actually largely supported by private funds, one can understand the reluctance to rely on other statements which come from it. The organized blind feel that Bureau personnel, despite the stated purpose of improving the image of the blind in the community by getting them jobs in competitive industry, have done little to change the existing attitudes. Edward Stokes, a member of the Delaware Federation and a worker at the General Motors assembly plant for many years, believes that the Bureau for the Blind relies on the workshop and vending stands rather than making a real attempt to get the blind into industry, private or government. He suggested a number of ways the Bureau could go about the business of obtaining better work for blind people including paying the fees charged by employment offices.

Delaware boasts that it has one of the highest blind aid payments in the country and the largest number of blind in proportion to population of any State. The average welfare grant is \$104 per month. Since the total expenditure for welfare, Federal and State combined, is \$427,733 for 364 people on aid, a little division again indicates that not everyone is getting the full amount he probably needs. Also brought out was the fact that another 600 people not receiving aid are in need of general services for the blind.

Part of the problems in services for the blind is the fact that almost all facilities as well as offices are located in Wilmington. Consequently, as the author of the article says "All 1,000 blind residents of Delaware are guaranteed equal

treatment under the law but some, depending on where they live, get more equal treatment than others." When one adds that two workers must handle 600 cases needing only services between them it is clear why many are neglected. The workers say that they concentrate on the newly blinded since they need the services more. If one wants such rehabilitation services as are offered, he must go to Wilmington. Of the twenty-three vending stands, only five are downstate. Some services outside Wilmington are contracted for with United Fund agencies.

Dr. Francis G. Cummings who ran the Commission for the Blind in Delaware for many years was an agency-minded blind man. While we may fault him for his paternalistic philosophy, he ran his agency with a firm hand for twenty years. He pushed legislation he thought would advance his program through the Legislature where he became known as a fighter for his bills.

Dr. Cummings, however, would brook no outside "interference", and kept down and kept out those who would organize the blind to help themselves. But in 1963, as Mr. Wilson puts it, "the torch of leadership at the Delaware Commission for the Blind was officially passed from a sightless, tenacious fighter . . . to a sighted assistant known for his amiability." Some blind people feel that Howard Jones' good nature is a liability since it affects his leadership of the agency where bringing personnel into line is concerned.

Mr. Wilson reports Joseph Spence on the subject of organizing the blind as saying "the blind had never [before the organization of the Delaware Federation] banded together because they were

'afraid.'" "By this, Spence said he meant that the blind in Delaware have generally felt indebted to the old blind commission for the aid they were receiving and some feared their aid would be cut off if they organized." Now, Mr. Wilson reports: "The blind are a closely knit, vocal minority keenly aware of what is happening everywhere of interest to the blind. They keep in constant touch with each other by telephone and, as one blind woman, a member of the blind commission, put it, 'The blind grapevine in Delaware is all-inclusive and accurate. When one blind person knows something, everyone knows it.'"

Inefficient, sheltered, and paternalistic as it was, the Commission for the Blind was the center of authority for programs for the blind in the State. Blind people knew that if they went there for help, someone had the authority to make a decision to start solving the problem. It was perfectly clear that the director, however misguided, was running the programs which he saw as most beneficial for the blind.

Now the arrangement is set for breaking the program into bits. No one is really in charge with whom the blind person in need of assistance can talk with any hope of immediate aid. All major decisions have to be made several steps in different directions in other offices. Despite the headline in the September 24 issue of the *Evening Journal* which announced that "Aid to Blind to be Upgraded in State" the upgrading it turns out means "that blind welfare recipients will have their financial and social services needs met by workers who also handle other adult categories." We all know what happens when 360 blind persons are

mixed with 3900 in the aged and disabled categories. Since the blind are such a small group in the overall caseload, and the social workers are already overburdened, who will recognize the fact that their problems are different from the others. We all know the answer to that one. While the article states that the "plan is to leave the specialized rehabilitative, education, and job-opportunity programs for the blind right where they have always been—at the State's blind agency" how long will it be before these programs are "improved" by adding them to the State's general rehabilitation program in the name of administrative convenience?

BARNETT SCORES COMBINING SERVICES

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted from a recent issue of *The American Foundation for the Blind's Newsletter*.]

A serious threat to the Federally assisted vocational rehabilitation programs for the blind and other physically handicapped was voiced recently by M. Robert Barnett, executive director of the AFB. Mr. Barnett warned that certain interests are seeking to combine the rehabilitation services of the non-physically handicapped disadvantaged with those of the disabled.

Speaking before the 30th annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Minneapolis, Mr. Barnett told the conventioners that those who would intrude the disadvantaged into the program of the handicapped would,

thereby, be placing the services for the latter in jeopardy. Mr. Barnett called the effort to combine the two services "the greatest threat to the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled in its fifty years as a Federally assisted program."

While admitting the existence of flaws in the present "system" employed in the rehabilitation of blind persons in the United States, Mr. Barnett stated that the same system was a source of considerable attraction to many groups. He then added, "There are those in this country who seem to believe that all of the problems of the so-called socially disadvantaged, the economically, ethnically, racially, and educationally disadvantaged should be brought under the umbrella of Federal-State rehabilitation funding and services. I maintain that not only is the rehabilitation program as we know it today an inappropriate channel to meet these vast problems, but that efforts to introduce non-physically handicapped individuals into the system will so dilute the resources available for blind and physically handicapped that none of several groups, including the original, will receive real assistance."

Pointing up the necessity for agencies for and of blind persons to settle possible differences in favor of concerted action prior to the imminent Congressional hearings on rehabilitation legislation, Mr. Barnett took note of the needs of the disadvantaged, but he felt that such services should be satisfied through "other channels." In amplifying this statement, Mr. Barnett continued, "It is our hope, of course, that the other groups concerned with their types of problems will not think us selfish or indifferent to them in their needs. It is simply that the problems of

education for the illiterate, training for the unskilled, welfare support for the poor, and social aid of many kinds for the elderly, must be approached through other channels, most of which already are in existence and which seem to have been unable in recent years to carry out their mandate or cope with the tremendous tasks which they face."

There is an obvious need to improve our basic public education system to meet special problems of the disadvantaged, Mr. Barnett stated. Their vocational educational problems require similar review and reinforcement, he added. A strengthened manpower training program, under the Manpower Administration of the Department of Labor, was a further suggestion to aid the disadvantaged, along with central job-finding assistance from a reinforced public employment service.

Taking note that there are certain elements in the field of rehabilitation for the disabled who are fostering the link of disadvantaged with the handicapped, Mr. Barnett deplored the action, "which can only have an adverse effect on the welfare of the disabled without any assurance of a substantial solution to the problems of the disadvantaged."

[AFB Newsletter Editor's Note: Speaking in Little Rock before the southwestern chapter of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, Mr. Barnett reaffirmed his Minneapolis position in deploring attempts to combine rehabilitation services of the disadvantaged with those of blind and physically handicapped persons.]

FORWARD–NOT BACKWARD

[Editor's Note: The following editorial is reprinted from *The White Cane*, official magazine of the Washington State Association of the Blind.]

If a doctor or a group of doctors conducted experimental operations on people against their wills and without their consent, they would be labeled as butchers, fiends, and criminals of the worst sort. They would be thrown out by their colleagues, ostracized by the public and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

If government bureaucrats, trying to make a name for themselves, propose and carry out experimental programs affecting people's lives, without consulting their victims or getting their consent, all in the name of "efficient operations", or "saving taxpayers money", they are scarcely even criticized, and to some become the big heroes of the day.

Perhaps not for long, however. More and more people are refusing to remain silent and inactive while experiments are conducted and decisions made that determine the kind of lives they lead and for how long. This goes for the blind as well.

In the area of services for the blind it is apparent we are caught up in the national trend toward Federal and State reorganization that threatens to wipe out hard won gains of the last decades. What is taking place here in Washington State is clearly part of a national pattern. What has happened in other States such as Vermont, Delaware, and Wisconsin, to name a few,

can happen here. The new trend is to reverse the direction toward separate, identifiable agencies, a system adopted in three-fourths of the States, and under which the blind have made significant gains towards independence and participation in society on a more equal basis. It doesn't make sense to destroy those gains. The obvious conclusion is that there are those in high places who do not know what they are doing, or just don't care a damn.

However, all is not as dismal as it may seem. The blind are not the weak, inarticulate group we once were. We now have our own organizations, the National Federation of the Blind and the Washington State Association of the Blind. It is through organizations of the blind themselves, with the support of understanding and willing sighted friends, that progress has been made and will be protected. What we want is more progress, not retrogression.

Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, dealt very sharply with this whole subject in an article titled, "The Separate Agency for the Blind—Why and Where." The article appeared in the July *Braille Monitor*. Just a couple of quotes from the article that point out the seriousness of the situation and some directions to go. He said,

Regardless of what the current trend may be, the reasons for a separate independent agency for the blind are as valid and compelling now as they have always been.

Once the agency is absorbed into the super-department, the blind will get a smaller percentage of the tax dollar, less

specialized know-how, and less flexibility to meet their unique problems.

Stating the need to *close ranks and stand together*, President Jernigan concluded the article with *As the blind themselves grow stronger in their organizations, there is every reason to believe that the various agencies will become increasingly effective in their performance and responsive in their behavior. Whatever else occurs, the blind must not permit the wholesale destruction of their agencies. In the name of trash burning, arson must not be committed, nor must vandalism be sanctioned in the name of reform.*

QUOTES FROM MY AFRICAN LETTERS-NIGERIA

by

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

I would like to return to Nigeria, and if I can't go, someone else much younger should go. Blind people there are on their toes, and they are asking for guidance. Their programs are just beginning, their break-away from medieval attitudes evident, their present ambivalence understandable.

Lagos is the capital—a Detroit-like city, busy, industrialized, mechanized, full of people, long broad streets, causeways to and from the sea, tall buildings, and automobiles, trucks, jeeps, tractors, ad infinitum, as well as ad nauseam! As I rode from Lagos to Ibadan one morning, my friend counted out to me sixteen trucks, buses, or vehicles broken down and in the

ditch. They need to observe speed limits, and more careful driving. But the nation is young, rarin' to go, and going. Notice I said the "nation", in spite of the fact that the Ibos still don't see eye to eye with the Yorubas, and that the Hausa Fulani in the north are still another consideration. Tribalism will exist for a long time to come, but nationalism is keeping pace alongside it. It is not a race. It is an amalgam which we folks of the western world couldn't understand.

Economically, politically, educationally, socially, Nigeria is alive. Its one hundred and ten million people are on the march for a better Nigeria. No, they don't like what is happening in South Africa or Rhodesia. Some even said to me, "Just wait." But their interest is at present in Nigeria, and will be so, long after the necessity for the seventeen-year-old, tommy-gun-toting youngster to stop you and ask you on the road for your passport, which he cannot read. He calls his superior with his superior tommy-gun to come and "read what it says".

But Ibadan was my destination, with its university, colleges, medical centers, schools, and its excellent program of integrated education for blind children. Integrated, please, means the integration of blind children with sighted children in the same classroom. They are all black, anyway. What does color mean to a blind guy? Absolutely nothing.

There are still, in my opinion, too many agencies for the blind, but I decided that as long as blind persons are being given opportunity, equality, and security, who should I be as a westerner, to question the method? So I became tolerant of their "councils for the blind",

and at every turn, suggested that the councils should have much more representation of blind persons for, after all, they knew more about blindness than did their sighted peers. So, though by and large, I feel that agencies for the blind are institutions for the creation of jobs for the sighted rather than for the blind, perhaps this is the way that we go forward as we forge new attitudes, blaze new trails. And bear in mind that we have to convince our own fellow blind of their own potential, and that's hard to do. Why should blind people, some think, worry about a job, if an agency is happy and proud to start a center for basketmaking, and place blind people in it for a bare existence? At least, I heard them say, one can eat no matter what nor how much! So I have learned to be patient with agencies overseas. The antidote is education of the blind themselves, and that's a long pull, when a goodly percentage of the sighted population is still illiterate. But Nigeria is moving. It is not standing still, and that is why I liked it. Now what more did my letters say?

I have a real sense of encouragement when I talk with blind people in these far-off places. They want direction, guidance. They don't want to stand still. But they think they are standing still, and they are looking to us for a way to move. One of my concerns was that I tried to steer away from imposing western ideas, even giving western ideas, for I found latent potential in these blind people, far outreaching anything I could suggest, for they were starting from where they were, which is where they have to start. To westernize is wrong. It would be false imitation. Progress comes in terms of their growth on their own soil, nourished by their own resources and efforts.

I believe the highlight of my stay in Nigeria was an interview on the education and training with placement of blind persons, with the Commissioner of Labor and another interview with the Commissioner of Education, both highly sensitive to the problems of the blind in their nation. Both spoke of redoubling their efforts in education and in training, getting a Braille press for school and college textbooks. Newsmen were present at both interviews. The radio carried the reports with suitable commentary. I was on television and radio speaking for the blind, also on the Voice of America at the invitation of the Public Affairs Office of the Embassy. Questions put to me were appropriately pointed, constructive, and imaginative. They were encouraging, to say the least of it.

I spoke at education meetings on the question of education of blind children. I went into the bush and talked with parents of blind children, teachers, and other Africans, probably themselves illiterate, but certainly interested in having this younger generation, both blind and sighted, acquire an education. Under the aegis of the Government of Nigeria and Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, a very successful integrated, or as they call it, open program, is being extensively carried out. The Government now has full charge of the program—another advance. Societies or agencies for the blind are also active. I do not turn these down, as I indicated previously. This is the way the program for the blind in Nigeria is developing. It is the Nigeria way.

The farm training center has a start, and a future. The civil war has for the present interrupted the growth of the

centers for, as I was told, people did not want to leave their villages during these difficult days. But again this is temporary. The agriculture center at Ogbomoso to the northwest of the country is energetic because the blind people there are energetic. At one rally I had the privilege of being on the program with one of the important tribal chiefs of the area. His talk was virile, and to the point, regarding opportunities for blind persons. Following the chief, a social worker gave a report on a blind farmer who had had unusual success with his poultry, and the sale of his unusually large eggs. The first point I made when called on to speak was that I would hope that this successful farmer would tell his own story, and not have the social worker speak for him, so that other blind persons could question him directly, and gather confidence from his experience first hand. The chief complimented me on my point. I said that the idea of waiting until the blind were better educated was wrong. Take the blind as they are at the moment. They can speak, in their own national language, and that was all that was necessary, and did not need others to speak for them. I wanted to meet this particular blind farmer, but he was not available.

There is in Nigeria an Association of the Blind, a grand group of people with terrific potential and a livewire of a president, a fine secretary, and several outstanding independent blind young men and women. They want our counsel in the formation and revision of their constitution, in the preparation of laws for the welfare of the blind.

Being my own secretary, for secretarial help was impossible to come by, is a headache while travelling. People

were afraid that their English would not pass muster, that they could not type. Their handwriting was precarious. But as the French say, *On se fait a tout*—and I simply had to get accustomed to everything. Besides, my main asset during my travels was the fact that I was travelling alone, that I was doing my own correspondence, preparing my own talks, writing my own Braille notes, and checking on my own itinerary and paying my own bills. This they wanted to know and to verify, because few blind travelers come their way from overseas. I was a “curiosity”. Questions about my white cane, and what it meant, were the order of the day, for the white cane is unknown in many more places than it is known. Our White Cane Law, copies of which I carried with me and passed around, was unintelligible, far beyond the comprehension and imagination of the majority.

MARYLAND CONVENTION

by

Roger Petersen

The Fourth Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland, (formerly the Free State Federation of the Blind), was held October 30th, 31st, and November 1st, at the Annapolis Hilton Motor Inn, Annapolis, Maryland. Nearly one hundred Federationists and friends from Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, and New York attended this first convention to be held outside Baltimore.

The convention opened with a brief

business meeting Friday evening, at which a resolution was passed changing the name of the organization, and a newly revised constitution was given its first reading. Following this session, resolutions and nominating committees met.

After an invocation by the Reverend Raymond MacDonald on Saturday morning, the conventioners were officially greeted by our State president, John McCraw; the president of the host chapter, Anne Arundel County Federation of the Blind, Eugene Schaeffer; and the mayor of Annapolis, Roger Moyer.

These words of welcome were followed by a report on the National Federation of the Blind's "Hawaii Survey", by John Taylor, our representative from the national office. The rest of the morning session was concerned with "Services to the Blind in Maryland", a panel discussion led by Ned Graham, and featuring Anne Reed, State Department of Social Services; Jerome Brooks, Maryland Workshop for the Blind; Weldon Nix, supervisor of the Vending Stand Program administered by the Maryland Workshop for the Blind; George Keller, supervisor, Services for the Blind, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; and James Murray, Maryland's Regional Librarian. This panel is an annual feature which always ends in a lively question and answer period.

The afternoon session included three very illuminating reports: a status report on the Maryland School for the Blind, by Peggy Wallace, public relations officer; a discussion of disability insurance, by Edward Binder, Social Security Administration, Woodlawn, Maryland, and a vitally informative talk concerning the

mechanics of getting bills through the Legislature by Tom McCarty, legislative analyst to the State Legislative Council. The final program item of the afternoon was an open discussion "What's on Your Mind?", led by the three "Johns", John Nagle, John Taylor, and John McCraw. There was such intense audience participation in this discussion, that John Nagle's Legislative Report had to be held over until Sunday morning.

The usual high point of the convention was the banquet on Saturday evening. The food was a gustatory delight, the entertainment, a pianist during dinner and a barber shop chorus after dinner, were things of joy, and Federationist spirit abounded.

John Taylor's inspiring banquet address furnished us just the fuel to keep the fires of Federationism glowing in Maryland for the year ahead. This year, we proudly presented an award to Senator Verda Welcome in appreciation of her steadfast friendship to the Federation throughout the four and one-half years of its existence here in Maryland. We were also extremely gratified that Senator Welcome thought this award so important that she and her husband, Dr. Harry Welcome, came to the banquet to receive it, even though election day was only three days off. In accepting the award, Senator Welcome pledged her continuing, close cooperation with our legislative goals.

The final convention session on Sunday morning included "Tell It Like It Is", moderated by John Nagle and featuring Margaret Haley, social worker, Division of Alcoholism, Spring Grove State Hospital, and Dr. Ed Lewinson,

whom we all know; Report:--National Legislation, by John Nagle, Chief, Washington Office, National Federation of the Blind; Reports:--State Legislative and Treasurer's, by Alan Schlank, State treasurer and legislative chairman; Election of officers: president, John McCraw, Baltimore; first vice-president, Roger Petersen, Baltimore; second vice-president, Martha Seabrooks, Baltimore; secretary, Doris Samuels, Baltimore; treasurer, Alan Schlank, Brentwood. John McCraw is delegate, and Georgia Myers, alternate delegate, to the NFB 1971 Convention in Houston. Convention sites for the next two years were selected: the 1971 convention will be hosted by the Twin County Federation of the Blind and will be held in the Washington, D. C. area; the 1972 convention will be hosted by the Associated Blind of Greater Cumberland and will be held in Cumberland.

At various times during the convention, articles of the new constitution were read, all of which were approved and accepted. Two additional resolutions were adopted--one committing the organization to an intensive effort to expand and to diversify job opportunities for the blind in Maryland and the other expressing the concern of the organization that we be allowed to participate in the planning of public transportation so that the needs of the blind and otherwise handicapped may be expressed to the planners.

In closing the convention, our president, John McCraw, included along with the usual expressions of appreciation a word of thanks to Ed Lewinson for attending "all four" of our conventions, all the way from New York City. Ed was elected a member-at-large in the National

Federation of the Blind of Maryland.

THE WAYS OF A RECIPIENT ARE HARD

[Editor's Note: The following ironic and skillfully written letter was sent by Alfred Gil, second vice-president of the California Council of the Blind and secretary of the San Gabriel Chapter to Perry Sundquist, chairman of the Council's Social Welfare Committee. Such a letter deserved action rather than an answer, and the matter was taken up immediately with the State Department of Social Welfare and, through that Department, with Los Angeles County.]

Dear Perry,

The members of our chapter are very concerned about the difficulty involved in determining how the aid grant is computed for recipients of Aid to the Blind, especially in Los Angeles County. Ever since the caseloads were divided into "eligibility" and "service" categories, it has been difficult for aid recipients to find out from their social workers how their grants are figured, assuming that is, that he is even able to find out who his social worker is.

1. Mr. A., a recipient of aid, calls the L. A. County D. P. S. S. When he asks to speak to his social worker, he is transferred several times and finally ends up by speaking to the person he was talking to in the first place. He is given, finally, the name of the person (possibly drawn out of a hat) who is supposed to be his social worker.

2. The aid recipient is given an extension number to call. With high hopes, albeit a little frustrated, he asks to be connected to said number only to find it is busy. After twenty minutes of "holding" his high hopes are turning to discouragement and his frustration is increasing. He hangs up, tries again, and this time is greeted by a unit clerk who mumbles into the phone that the worker has stepped away from her desk "for a moment". The clerk convincingly promises Mr. A. that the worker will call him within the hour. When this forecast fails to come true, Mr. A. calls again. He is greeted again by Miss Mumbles who now informs him that the worker has gone to lunch. (Miss Mumbles presumably does not eat lunch.) In one hour Mr. A. calls again. This time he is greeted by another unit clerk (maybe Miss Mumbles does eat lunch after all.) The clerk informs Mr. A. that this is the worker's afternoon in the field.

3. Mr. A. is finally able to speak with the worker but only after several abortive attempts ("she's attending a meeting," "she's in conference"). The worker seems to be unaware that Mr. A. has been trying to reach her. The worker indicates that she has just been transferred to the caseload and that she cannot give him any information. She indicates that she will get his folder from the file and call him right back. After three days and no telephone call, he begins to suspect that he may have been forgotten, but alas! such is not the case. Upon talking to the worker, again after several abortive attempts, Mr. A. is informed that his folder cannot be located. It may be in the medical unit, the food stamps division, or (God help us) in the bowels of the computer.

4. Several days later his case is located. In the meantime another worker has been assigned to the case. He asks the new worker several questions and receives such answers as. "I don't know," "I'll have to check with my supervisor," or "You'll have to speak with a service worker." This is not easy either inasmuch as a service worker must first be assigned to his case before Mr. A. can speak with one. In order for this to happen, the eligibility worker must decide that the recipient needs a service worker. At this point, Mr. A. tells the worker (in non-ministerial terms) to forget the whole thing and please just send a budget sheet to him. With that well-known smile in her voice, she promises faithfully to do so.

5. A week later, when the promised budget sheet has not yet arrived, Mr. A. calls Jerry Drake. Mr. A. is treated to Jerry's standard half hour lecture on the inefficiencies and injustices credited to the L. A. County D. P. S. S. Jerry recommends an appeal and Mr. A. agrees. Two days later (could it be coincidence) Mr. A.'s budget sheet arrives in the mail.

We believe that recipients of Aid to the Blind should receive a budget sheet whenever the grant is changed. Further, we believe that said sheet can be made easy to read by the average person, listing all the possible special needs.

Many times receipts, vouchers, or paycheck stubs need to be sent in to the Welfare Department for verification of needs and/or income. Very often receipts and pay stubs are not returned to the recipient. It is often the case that these pay stubs and receipts are valuable and important to the recipient, and every effort should be made to see that these

documents are returned.

Another problem faced by some recipients in our area is the failure on the part of the social worker to keep appointments. This causes great hardships and inconvenience to recipients, inasmuch as they must stay at home the entire day waiting for a social worker who may not show up. If a worker cannot keep an appointment for any reason, it seems reasonable to us that the least she can do is to phone the recipient to indicate that the appointment cannot be kept.

The members of our chapter will appreciate it if you will put these items on the agenda for discussion with appropriate recommendations at the next Council social welfare meeting.

Hoping to hear from you very soon, I remain.

Cordially,

Alfred Gil, Secretary

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COLORADO CONVENTION

by

Lyle Neff

The Colorado State convention was held Saturday, November seventh at the Denver Area building located at 901 East 17th Avenue. Registration was begun at nine o'clock a.m. and State president Ruth Ashby called the convention to order at ten o'clock. After some opening remarks from our guest, Kenneth Jernigan, President of the NFB, the morning was

taken up with business reports. The afternoon featured several speakers all of them giving us much to think over. Marge Peters, a member of parents of blind children, was the first speaker. Judy Miller, one of the first blind persons teaching in the regular schools of Colorado, told about how she got her job, and her experiences with her work. We heard from Stanley Boxer, senior supervisor of the Colorado vending stand program. A panel discussion was moderated by President Jernigan concerning the future of employment of the blind in Colorado. The panel included Claude Tynar, head of rehabilitation for the blind in Colorado, Marie Stauter, chairman of the legislative committee of C. R. A., and Ray McGeorge, president of the Denver Area Association of the Blind. Questions from the floor were discussed by the panel. The afternoon ended with reports from the nominations and resolutions committees. A resolution that will interest *Monitor* readers was one of thanks and appreciation to Mr. Charles Ritter who has just retired as assistant director of Colorado rehabilitation for the blind for his efforts in behalf of the blind both while at the American Foundation for the Blind and in Colorado. At our banquet Saturday night the speaker was Dr. Jernigan. We in Colorado felt the 1970 convention was very successful because of the large number of people that attended. All of us left the convention with the desire to get many more blind in Colorado to join the National Federation.

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INDIANA PROPOSES A SCHOOL FOR BLIND ADULTS

[Editor's Note: The Board of Directors of the proposed school includes representatives of the academic community, social workers, administrators of public and private education programs, libraries and other agencies for the blind, and the Indiana Council of the Blind in the person of NFB Executive Committeeman Ray Dinsmore.]

We are interested in developing a school which will serve the 9,500 blind and visually handicapped adults in the State of Indiana, some 2,000 of whom are living in the Indianapolis area.

In an effort to improve the lot of these persons, we should like (1) to secure the provision of whatever instruction may be necessary in order to enable them to obtain a General Educational Development Achievement Test Certificate; (2) to attempt to develop in these students, through ego-reinforcing success experience in their studies and in the securing of their certificates, a greater measure of self-confidence and self-esteem than many have previously known; (3) to give the students a better appreciation of the employment opportunities which currently exist for competent blind persons and (4) to encourage and help a number of them to go on beyond the primary and secondary school levels to acquire additional formal education, both in colleges and centers for vocational training. To our knowledge there is no school of this nature presently operating in the State of Indiana.

Members of the Board of Directors of

the School will assist in the recruiting of students. The board will inform potential students of the new facility by means of publications for the blind (e.g., *Hoosier Starlight*), through public service announcements over radio and television and through newspapers and other publicity media. One or more interested persons will be asked to call upon potential students to inform them of the scholastic opportunity being offered, and encourage them to become involved in the program. All blind or visually handicapped persons interested in entering the school will be interviewed and a determination made as to his or her educational background and instructional needs for purposes of class placement.

The texts to be used in preparing students for the General Educational Development Tests will consist primarily of the General Educational Development tape-recordings approved by the State Department of Public Instruction and obtainable at no charge from the Library of Congress, and secondarily, of such ancillary teaching materials as may be suggested by the teachers themselves and other persons competent to do so.

Blind or visually handicapped persons who hear of the school and wish to learn more about it will be encouraged to call or write the office of Technical and Managerial Services, 3620 Washington Boulevard, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205, telephone, 317-925-7600, where they will be given additional information.

Those who decide to enroll as students will be sent a simple questionnaire for their completion and return for the use of the school in developing contacts with the students, in

making class assignments, etc.

We should like to open the school with an enrollment of one hundred students but will begin the first year with fewer than that number because of problems having to do with publicizing the school, motivating persons to enroll, transportation and even housing for persons living beyond commuting distance.

We intend to develop through the efforts of our Board of Directors effective liaison between our school and other schools and services such as the Indiana School for the Blind, the Indiana Agency for the Blind, the various county departments of public welfare, the State Department of Public Welfare, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Indiana State Employment Service, the Indiana State Library, the Veterans Administration, the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Indiana Association of Public School Adult Educators.

The most obvious measure of the success of the program of study we propose to undertake will be that of the percentage of our students who are enabled to acquire a General Educational Development Achievement Test Certificate. However, we also intend to use instruments by means of which the attitudes of our students toward themselves and their environment can be measured at the time of enrollment and following their educational experience in our school so that we can evaluate the more subtle changes which we expect will occur in them.

On the basis of twenty (20) students

to begin with, we shall require a staff of seven persons to operate the school. This initial group should be comprised of a supervisor, a teacher, a teacher's aide, a psychometrist, a secretary, a bookkeeper, and a custodian. We would hope that the services of the supervisor and of the bookkeeper would be provided by the Indianapolis Public Schools. The teacher and her aide ought to be furnished by a local educational agency and should meet the criteria established thereby in terms of training, certification and experience. The psychometrist could be secured locally on a consultant basis until the school growth should necessitate the making of other arrangements. As school enrollment increases we would hope that additional teachers and teacher aides could be employed as needed. At first the school secretarial and custodial functions could be performed by persons presently employed by the Central Christian Church who should receive compensation from the school through the church for their additional work. Later, with the growth of the school, it might become necessary to hire additional secretarial, if not custodial, personnel. These should be selected by the personnel committee of the Board of Directors on the basis of their capacity to do the work required as well as their feelings about blind persons. As soon as conditions permit, we should also like to secure the services of a school recruiter, a psychiatric social worker and an employment counsellor.

The board will work out with representatives of the Division of Adult Education and the local education agency the general guidelines for the use of the school and will likewise develop means of evaluating the soundness of the ongoing educational program.

We have made tentative arrangements with the administrative officers of the Central Christian Church to rent space in their Education Building at 701 N. Delaware Street for use of the school.

We shall have the use as required of up to five large classrooms, located on the second floor of the Education Building and reached by a broad staircase with bannisters and handrails. Adequate toilet facilities are available for both men and women adjacent to the classrooms.

Because blind persons must rely heavily upon public bus service for their transportation, location of the school in an area served by the Indianapolis Transit System is highly desirable. The Central Christian Church facility, which is located at the junction of Ft. Wayne Avenue, Delaware and Walnut Streets, is served by two city bus lines.

Off-the-street parking is available in the church parking lot for use of the school staff and visitors.

Classes will be conducted for a three hour period three days per week.

Because blind and visually handicapped persons are frequently subject to economic deprivation, efforts will be made by the board to secure funds with which to provide lunches for the students and to cover the cost of their transportation to and from the school.

Students will have an area set aside for their use as a lunch room and lounge.

The school will be located directly across the street from the Education Center of the Indianapolis Public Schools

where the General Educational Development Tests are given to anyone seeking to obtain a General Educational Development Achievement Test Certificate.

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN OF TEACHERS' DIVISION

by
Pauline Gomez

The annual meeting of the Blind Teachers' Division at the 1970 NFB Convention in Minneapolis elected me its chairman for the year. Two other officers were also chosen, Myrna Schmidt, an elementary music teacher in the New Jersey schools, as vice-chairman; and Evelyn Weckerly, a high school English teacher in the Michigan schools, as secretary. I teach kindergarten and have been operating a full-fledged school since 1946. My students are sighted; there are no State financed kindergartens in New Mexico.

The principal duty of these officers is to plan the 1971 seminar in Houston. It is important that we take advantage of this opportunity for blind teachers from all over the United States to meet by making these seminars purposeful and productive. I propose a three-point plan.

1 I strongly recommend that NFB affiliates take the necessary legislative action to help solve the existing problems in the education and employment of blind teachers in their State. Legislation such as the Model White Cane Law and the California Grunsky Act—a survey which showed with what effectiveness and

competence blind teachers in that State were already teaching--would prohibit discrimination against the blind in all areas of teaching. Especially, such legislation would make it mandatory that teachers be hired on the basis of academic qualifications rather than a criterion such as visual acuity.

2. I am calling on Myrna Schmidt, Evelyn Weckerly, and a few sub-committee chairmen to bring functional reports to Houston next July. (I will communicate personally with my assistants.) I am requesting an accurate presentation of the following material: a) The victories of the NFB in the past year in relation to the employment of and equal opportunities for blind teachers; b) successful legislation achieved by State affiliates on the same subjects; and c) progress reports from California and New York--the two States leading in the employment of blind teachers.

3. I would like a good number of school administrators from the Houston area to participate in an active discussion with blind teachers. The venture will require a great deal of communication with the Texas affiliate, but if it is successful it will be one of the most important steps we take at our 1971 meeting.

If you are a blind teacher and you have decided to attend the 1971 NFB Convention, I will appreciate hearing from you. Suggestions on a convenient time for our meeting are more than welcome. Please write to me at 329 E. Buena Vista Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501.

ARIZONA CONVENTION

by
James Carlock

The Arizona Federation of the Blind held a two-day convention on the weekend of September 19 and 20 at the Romley's Motor Inn in Yuma, Arizona. NFB Secretary Lawrence Marcelino represented the National Federation of the Blind.

The invocation and welcoming addresses were followed by chapter and committee reports, after which we recognized guests, with particular focus on the Yuma blind visitors. The chair commented on the desirability of the Arizona Federation to build a member chapter in Yuma, and how important it is for all blind people to be members of the Federation.

A discussion on the Model White Cane Law covered past experience and current plans in channeling it through the Legislature. We also discussed how the agency might participate at committee meetings at the next session of the Legislature. Other highlights were the presentation and reading of the fiscal report for 1969-1970 and Division of Rehabilitation for the Visually Impaired read by the director, Richard W. Bleecker. An interesting discussion followed. The general topic of rehabilitation was discussed by DRV1 counselors, Fred Brick and George Mayo. All found the viewpoints informative and challenging, particularly the problem of the multihandicapped blind. It would seem that at least some of the counselors believe in preparing a trained client to solo on job interviews in job-seeking situations. A

strong enforcement of the belief in the trained client to both the potential employer and the client was expressed by the rehabilitation agency.

State reorganization trends in the Nation were discussed, and followed by a presentation of a proposal by the Arizona Association of Workers with the Blind, which, if passed, would improve State programs by binding the existing services together by statute.

A segment of the agenda was given to *The Braille Monitor*. We discussed the forms in which it can be obtained, and possible ways it might be improved. One in particular seemed to be evident: that a portion might be given to advertise both available job seekers, or positions open in State or private agencies. Perhaps many qualified blind could then learn of positions for which they could apply.

The election completed the Saturday afternoon session, with results as follows: president, James R. Carlock, Phoenix; first vice-president, Ray Miranda, Phoenix; second vice-president, Daniel Duffy, Phoenix; secretary, Katherine Hurley, Prescott; treasurer, Lee Roy Kerr, Phoenix; and directors Gloria Tester, Keams Canyon and Pam Schmidt, Phoenix.

Saturday evening featured the convention banquet. NFB Secretary Lawrence Marcelino presented the address. The AFB Scholarship was voted to be donated to the tenBroek Memorial Fund and a breadbasket was passed around the room for additional contributions; the total was \$120, \$100 of this coming from the scholarship donation. Muzzy spoke on Federationism, what it is and who it is and

how important local and State organizations are in keeping everyone represented and active in the movement on all levels.

Sunday morning was filled with promoting a student division. This was a panel discussion made up of three of our college students, Ray Miranda, Arizona State University; Tom Combs, Phoenix College; and Dan Duffy, Arizona State University. It was unanimously agreed to establish a student division of the Arizona Federation of the Blind.

A current study of Arizona's rehabilitation needs in adjustment and orientation, spearheaded by the Melvin Jones Lions Center of Phoenix was explained and discussed.

Resolutions followed a Vending Stand Program report by Mr. Mayfield of DRVIL. The program is constantly expanding and upgraded. Resolutions discussed concerned the Model White Cane Law, expressing our support of the AAWB (Arizona) proposed legislation, a possible anti-mendicant law and a Little Randolph Sheppard Law.

The convention voted to have our next State convention in 1971 at Kingman, Arizona. The convention also voted to send a total of three to Houston in 1971, who were: James Carlock, official delegate; Dan Duffy, representative of and to the student division; and Joe Sizemore, second alternate.

VENDING STAND TROUBLES IN NEW JERSEY

by
Sam Earle

[Reprinted from the Trenton (New Jersey) *Trentonian*.]

Vending machines don't smile or say good morning. They clank and steal your dime. A gas station operator once pulled a gun and shot one. It didn't bleed. It didn't even say ouch. If a person pulled half the outrageous pranks that are common to vending machines, he would probably end up in jail, or with a bloody nose.

But Ronald Heymann, director of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Division, has decided to replace the coffee shop in his building with vending machines, according to Joseph Kohn, director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind. The shop which is run by people who smile and say good morning and don't steal your dime was to be closed by October 1, Kohn confirmed.

Heymann steadfastly refused to comment on the move. He insisted Kohn "is more knowledgeable of the situation than I am." However, the decision to close the shop, which is run by a thirty-seven-year-old blind man, was made on the basis of Heymann's needs for more space in the MV building, Kohn said. "We (the commission) are planning to close the shop," Kohn said. "We had a meeting on it (he and Heymann) and a determination has been made as to the very pressing needs for space."

The system which got Linsinbigler into the coffee shop business—along with

hundreds of other blind people—works like this: The Commission for the Blind sets up these food vending stands, gets them going and turns them over to blind people who run them and live on the income. Once a blind operator takes over an operation, it's his business. The profits are his income. He can hire help, or he can run it alone. It depends on the size of the operation and his business judgment. A Federal act gives the commission for the blind first crack at running these operations in government office buildings. But the commission apparently retains the right to close them down or agree to close them down.

Heymann's plan for the space now occupied by the shop reportedly is to install a new computer there. Heymann has confirmed that report in the past. What happens to Arthur Linsinbigler, the blind operator? "He will be relocated at an operation of equal value," Kohn said. That means equal income for Linsinbigler—equal to what he now makes—Kohn explained.

What about the four persons working for Linsinbigler? "There won't be as many people employed there (at the new location)," Kohn said. Kohn refused to disclose the new location, but he let slip enough details for Robert Owens, Linsinbigler's right-hand man, to venture a knowledgeable guess. Owens said Kohn is probably talking about the operation in the Labor and Industry building on John Fitch Way. "It's a one-man operation," he said.

That would mean Owens and the three women now working for Linsinbigler will be looking for jobs. Owens is a member of the National Federation of the Blind. Kohn said his commission would do "whatever we can" for Owens if he needs

help finding another job. If.

"It's a pretty rotten deal," Owens said, "the way it was done. . . the way it's been handled. Why should either of us (he and Linsinbigler) put any faith in the commission for the blind to place us anywhere? They can't even defend our stand once we get in here."

The people who work in Linsinbigler's coffee shop were not taking anything sitting down. They were protesting with signs and with comments to MV employees. "Kick a blind man today," said the sign one of the women was wearing in the coffee shop. The other half of that sign said, "Tomorrow kickback on a vending machine." "Employ the handicapped—elsewhere," said another sign.

Owens said he received orders from Heymann via two armed MV inspectors to get rid of the signs by 11 a.m. "Because they're embarrassing him (Heymann)," Owens said.

Late in the afternoon, the people who smile and say good morning and don't steal your dime—and bleed when you shoot them—were still wearing their signs of protest. The coffee shop opened about two years ago—October 1968—Owens said, because a lot of pressure from disgruntled MV employees who were tired of rude, thieving vending machines. Now they're getting it all back. "The promised land of broken promises," said another sign. Could be some MV employees would appreciate that one.

EX-MARINE SEES SIGHTLESS COMEBACK

by
Robert Dietrich

[Reprinted from the San Diego
(California) *Evening Tribune*.]

"The worst thing you can do to a blind person is give him your sympathy," says a Marine veteran who lost his sight in a 1965 Vietnam ambush. "I spent two years being bitter and feeling sorry for myself until some fine people got me to kick the habit," explained Robert L. Bingman, Jr. "They were pretty hard on me and it took a while." Bingman, now thirty-two, is about to start his third year of college. He wants to be a lawyer.

He was a Marine staff sergeant with nearly eleven years of service behind him when hidden Viet Cong opened fire on the reconnaissance patrol he was leading. Shrapnel from an exploding mine wiped out his sight. Memories of two years he wasted doing nothing in a Naval Hospital prompted him to become a "part-time sergeant" to work with newly blinded patients.

"I was a D.I. (Drill Instructor) once," he said "I use some pretty hard-nosed language in bullying blind youngsters into facing reality right now." A blinded man aged nineteen or twenty almost always thinks life is over for him, Bingman said. "I don't give them any sympathy and I brag about what I've done for myself in just three years." Bingman has learned to touch-type at a rate of forty-two words per minute, has developed a technique for tape-recording lectures and has maintained a steady "A" average at San Diego City

College.

The blind veteran has also taken on family responsibilities. Last week he married the former Dian Copus who has a son, Paul, three, by a previous marriage. The new Mrs. Bingman is partially blind.

It was the sightless widow of a retired Navy chief boatswain's mate who helped Bingman overcome his self-pity three years ago. "She was a salty old girl and used a lot of colorful Navy language to start me back to some kind of life," he said. "I knew from the beginning I would never see again, even though the Navy doctors put me through nineteen operations and tried one eye transplant."

He said he learned to touch-type from instruction recordings and taught himself to use some of the Braille alphabet. He receives a one hundred per cent disability pension from the Marine Corps. Mrs. Bingman is a Pacific Telephone Company employee.

* * * * *

JOIN THE UNITED FUND? WHY NOT?

[Reprinted from the *Minnesota Bulletin* published by the Minnesota Organization of Blind, Inc.]

We appreciate your inquiry as to why the Minnesota Organization of Blind is not a member of the United Fund. This is a fair question and deserving of a rational answer. We are cognizant of your concern as a businessman for the need to consolidate fundraising as much as possible.

This is all well and good in such cases as family service, settlement houses, mentally retarded, the disturbed, the lonely, child care, etc. That is not to say that all non-profit groups should categorically belong in the United Fund. Our organization most surely has no quarrel with the United Fund. Obviously, it is doing a job that otherwise just would not get done.

Ours is a self-help, self-betterment group. Unfortunately, the blind have always been regarded as dependent. We are out to change this image from one of dependency to one of equality and independence. That is the reason we prefer to raise our own funds and plan our own projects with the help of and in direct consultation with understanding and knowledgeable representatives of the public.

Over the years this organization has developed contacts with various foundations, business corporations and individuals. To participate in the United Fund would mean that these arrangements and accounts would virtually be relinquished by our organization. Contributions made to our organization would then be allocated to us as the United Fund saw fit, based upon certain fiscal considerations and procedures. Under the present arrangement, we have more elbow room and the opportunity to be one's own spokesman. This is not to be construed as in any way derogatory to the United Fund.

Our fundraising effort is strictly on a volunteer basis; the cost is not over five percent. Our organization is duly registered under the Charities Registration Law and with the Internal Revenue

Service for purposes of tax exemption.

Hopefully, we might continue to merit your support.

Sincerely,

Phil Houghtelin, Chairman
Special Committee on Finance

RFB FIGHTS DISCRIMINATION

Henrietta McCullough, enrolled as a sophomore at Ursuline College in Cleveland, Ohio, was refused permission to lodge in the college dormitories with her guide dog. The dean of students, Sister Michael Francis, refused to discuss the matter except in the presence of a lawyer. A new Ohio law, effective July 16, 1970, entitles blind persons with trained guide dogs to full and equal accommodations and privileges of all public lodging places. Ursuline College's action was clearly in violation of this law.

This case of discrimination against the blind was brought to the attention of the NFB by Jasha Levi, Assistant Executive Director of Recording for the Blind, Inc., who wrote on October 20 to President Jernigan as follows:

Today we received a letter from the mother of one of our borrowers, Henrietta McCullough, who was barred from Ursuline College in Cleveland, Ohio. This case was publicized in the newspapers and therefore I feel free to divulge her name.

Henrietta apparently borrowed three inkprint books from the Ursuline College library. They were sent to us to be recorded for her. Mrs. McCullough writes now: "Please send me a letter stating that you have sent the print books back to Ursuline College, 2600 Lander Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44124. Their lawyer, [of the firm of] Thomas, Marolt, and Conway insists that the print books be returned at once to the college."

The very fact that Henrietta was barred from living in the dormitory because of her guide dog would be bad enough. But the college action, starting a legal procedure to recall the books being recorded for her before they even have been completed, seems to me outrageous. We will of course have to comply with this request of the Ursuline College lawyers.

I hope you will give this case as wide a publicity as possible and exert as much pressure as possible against the kind of illegal and inhumane treatment accorded Henrietta at Ursuline College.

Sincerely,

Jasha Levi

Henrietta McCullough has found another college to attend, John Carroll University, but such illegal discrimination against the blind continues.

ARKANSAS CONVENTION

by

Ramona Ennis

The annual convention of the Arkansas Federation of the Blind was held in Little Rock, Sunday, November 15. The honored guest this year was Mr. Richard Nelsen, past president of the AFB. We were glad to see him after his long absence due to illness.

Following the banquet, the mood became one of complete concentration as members got down to the business at hand. In the past, our organization had begun to slow down in its efforts to bring about better conditions for the blind in Arkansas. We are happy to report that with the help of our increased membership, we hope to be operating at full capacity when our State Legislature convenes in January.

Of much interest to our membership is the 1971 National Convention. Because the Convention is to be held in our neighboring State of Texas, it is our hope that we can send a large delegation.

Highlight of the convention was the election of officers for the coming year. Elected to serve in 1971 were Mrs. Alpha Ennis, 3009 South Tyler, Little Rock; Melvin Morrison, first vice president; Roy Sorrells, second vice president; Mrs. Richard Nelsen, treasurer; Ramona Ennis, secretary; Leslie McDaniel, Mrs. Lillian Sanders, and Harry Bass, members-at-large.

PETITIONS FOR DISABILITY INSURANCE BILL

[Editor's Note: The following correspondence between NFB President Kenneth Jernigan and Noah Panger of Seattle, Washington shows how far one can go on initiative and imagination.]

Seattle, Washington
October 24, 1970

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

At age seventy-one I am only a retired journeyman machinist with two most troublesome ailments, diabetes and a peripheral vascular condition. Therefore, not being a writer with my limited vision, please excuse the mistakes and improper quotations. I will endeavor to explain briefly as possible some of my experience since becoming legally blind in 1952 and after I became a member of our Seattle affiliate this last February. I hope this will not be too long and boring that you can have time to read this.

After being retired from Boeing employment on account of my vision I tried to obtain employment by every possible contact I could learn of, State Employment, State Rehabilitation, the CIO-AFL and other sources, all to no avail.

When I became a member of our chapter I was asked to work on the legislative committee. I was advised to work on the bill H.R. 3782 by calling all blind persons and whoever interested to write their Congressmen to support this bill. That proved useless as only ten or twelve letters were received by our

Congressmen as they advised. I wrote a full page bulletin giving the details of the bill and the great importance of every blind person and any others interested in helping the blind to write in persuading their Congressman to give their earnest support on the bill. I concluded by asking if they would please inform me of their interest or intentions, also the action of their District Representatives. I sent a copy of this bulletin to each of ten State affiliates. I never even received one reply.

In June election of officers I was asked to be legislative chairman, which I accepted temporarily. I had decided by now to try obtaining petition signatures. I was yet unable to get anyone to work with me. I did take out some petitions and was able to mail several signed to the Honorable Wilbur Mills and Committee, till our bill was included with the H.R. 17550 and sent to the Senate Finance Committee.

I later was given permission to have a sign made that copies could be made and worn to show we were members of our chapter, asking for signatures to have the bill S. 2518 passed by the Congress. By August I was fortunate to have a totally blind aged woman and a man who offered to work with me and they became very interested and reliable. We went to work on our city business intersection corners. Many of the public signers after reading the bill remarked that was a very good bill that should have been passed long before. To October 18 we mailed 828 petition signatures to Chairman Russell Long and Committee members. Due to the cold and rain we cannot continue our outside work.

We do know of one good or bad reason for the lack of cooperation of the

blind that exists in different areas as does here. It is due to the number of different agencies, especially the large ones in operation such as the Sellers Brothers. Also the American Foundation as you likely know is our greatest problem here, in Seattle. As to our other State affiliate members to whom I sent the bulletin which I previously mentioned, not having such conditions to interfere with their activities, did not even make a brief reply in concern to such an important beneficial measure, is quite evident of the lack of cooperation.

After speaking with a number of our members, we have to believe that such negligence of proper duties does exist too much through our National Federation affiliate members or our Disability Insurance Bill would have been enacted Federal law before now if they had helped. Whatever concept you may name this type of blind members cooperation will be much more appropriate than what I have been calling delinquent.

Congratulations from us legislative workers on your article in the September issue of *The Braille Monitor*, "Blindness-The Myth and the Image." Very impressive, informative and interesting.

It is sad that more of the blind do not devote a part of their idle time to read or hear our monthly *Braille Monitor*. That would undoubtedly create more interest, cooperation and progress for the benefit of all our blind members.

Respectfully,

N H. Panger
Legislative Chairman, King County White

Cane Association of the Blind

Jernigan writes to Warren Toyama,
president of Hawaii Federation.]

November 5, 1970

Mr. Noah H. Panger
4522 South Findlay Street
Seattle, Washington 98118

Dear Mr. Panger:

I have just received and read your fine letter, and I thank you for it. If we had more people like you and the people who have worked with you, our disability bill would already have been enacted into law. However, we must keep at it and do all that we can, for the bill must be adopted. We have hopes that the Senate Finance Committee (and later the full Senate) will adopt our bill and that it will then be accepted by the Senate House Conference.

Your work in getting petitions signed is just the sort of thing we need. I want you to know that I appreciate your efforts and also your thoughtfulness in writing to me. Keep up the good work, and let me hear from you from time to time.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

* * * * *

NO "INSIGHT" AT LOW VISION
CLINIC

[Editor's Note: NFB President Kenneth

Dear Warren:

You recently sent me a brochure called "Insight" published by your State agency for the blind, with the request that I comment on it. No one can quarrel, of course, with the wish to have every person able to make maximum use of his eyesight. However, I think it is a mistake (and also a distortion of the truth) to try to emphasize the positive nature of visual aids by painting blindness as an unmitigated tragedy, necessarily making one inferior and unable to compete.

It seems to me that the brochure tends to take this approach. Consider, for instance, that portion which reads: "I am one of those people who is using daily both microscopic and telescopic lenses to see just a little better, where previously, I had to depend on sighted readers struggling to read college and professional materials not available in Braille. Now I can read these materials with 4 power microscopic spectacle. I also use different magnifications, such as, 1-½ power, 2 power, 6 power and 8 power, for specific purposes. Binocular and monocular aids are also used for watching television, telling time from a raised wall clock, girl watching (from a great distance, of course), and just plain traveling."

This individual tells us that he can now read and do other things with eyesight. Well and good. But is the use of special lenses to see a raised wall clock really that much superior to using a Braille watch? Maybe, but I doubt it. The Braille watch can be read with no problem or

difficulty at all. Perhaps the clock can, too. It all depends on how well he really sees and how much apparatus he has to use. He says that he can now read for himself instead of "depending on sighted readers struggling to read college and professional materials not available in Braille." Admittedly there is some advantage in being able to pick up any book that comes to hand and read it instead of having to get the material in Braille or do the planning required to have readers available. But this is a far cry from what is implied by the word "struggling". I, for one, went through graduate and undergraduate work using sighted readers and having very little material in Braille and I now deal with a veritable mountain of printed material as a routine part of my job, but I have never really thought of myself as being thereby culturally deprived or professionally disadvantaged. It is simply a matter of planning and proper utilization of resources.

Perhaps the most significant passage in the brochure is the one which reads: "Without all of these aids, I would be just as blind as I had been from the beginning. With them I have the illusion of seeing 20/20, especially when I can look at beautiful people and things!" There seems to be almost an urgency in the need to have "the illusion of seeing 20/20." This almost has the old familiar ring of the person who feels complimented when someone tells him, "you are so normal that I almost forget you are blind." Sometimes people struggle to use eyesight which they don't really have regardless of how inefficient and inconvenient it may be simply because they think it is normal.

This is not to disparage eyesight or minimize its importance. Rather, it is an

attempt to set matters in perspective. It seems to me that one should use the combination of visual and blind techniques which will permit him to function most efficiently and that he should not be overly concerned about which technique is "normal". We must get away from the notion (still held consciously or unconsciously by too many people) that blindness carries with it a stigma. Undue concern in the area of techniques may divert us from dealing with the real problems of blindness—the misunderstanding, the discrimination, the lack of opportunity, the denial of rights, the under-employment, and similar matters.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

INSIGHT

News from Ho' O Pono
Vocational Rehabilitation
and Services for the Blind Division
Department of Social Services

THE LOW VISION CLINIC *A Service to Help you "See Better"*

An optical aids service popularly called the Low Vision Clinic is one of the services available at Ho'opono since 1964. It has special meaning for persons with vision so poor that ordinary prescription glasses can no longer help them to "see better". About eighty per cent of these persons when properly fitted with a special optical aid or appliance can be helped to use their remaining vision more

efficiently. There are two major types of aids: aids for near work and aids for distance.

The visual improvement resulting from the use of the aid may enable the individual to continue in his job, restore his ability to read print, read the labels on the cans in the supermarket or read the destination of the bus from a distance, and perform other activities which, without his visual aid, he might find difficult or impossible.

Optical aids services have been increasingly used since their inception in the early 1950's. Prior to that time individuals with impaired vision were discouraged from using their eyes for prolonged reading, sewing, movie watching, etc., in the belief that further visual loss would result. However, this misconception has been put to rest, and unless otherwise cautioned by the eye doctor, an individual with poor vision is now encouraged to make maximum use of his remaining vision.

Peter J. Salmon, former Executive Director of the Industrial Home for the Blind (IHB), and a pioneer in advancing optical aids programs for near blind persons has this to say about his personal experience: *My own interest in the use of magnification and specially fitted lenses had been rewarded some ten years prior to the inauguration of the IHB Program of Optical Aids when I secured first my sports lenses, and later, my Kollmorgen telescopes with a cap to slip on for near vision. Near is the right word because there was little space between the reading material and my nose. Having learned of necessity to read Braille some forty years before this great event in my life, I may be*

pardoned if I use my personal experience to point up the inherent values in this optical aids service. Since the day I was fitted with these lenses, I have read with comfort literally tons of the written word.

The Low Vision Clinic at Ho'oponohu is the only one of its kind in the State of Hawaii, and its services are available to anyone in the State upon referral by his doctor. An eye report from the doctor is a requirement before an individual can be scheduled for a clinic appointment. Clinic patients range in age from four years to over eighty years of age. Patients are responsible for the payment of their optical aids which may cost anywhere from ten dollars to seventy-five dollars. However, no one is denied service because of his financial situation. Resources will be obtained for those individuals who are unable to meet the cost of the prescribed optical aid or aids.

To again quote Mr. Salmon: *It is difficult for anyone, except the person with limited sight to realize what it means to be able to see just a little better, even with some inconvenience.*

NOW READ THIS

Can the Low Vision Clinic help towards increasing a blind person's independence? Here is one case where the Low Vision Clinic has helped.

Unbelievable as it may seem to many of us today, there was a time, not too long ago, when all legally blind people had Braille as their chief means of reading and writing. Later, large print was introduced for those who could use it. The talking records and magnetic tapes were later developments as reading aids.

The desire to see has always been any man's ultimate goal. Corrective eye glasses have been available for some time for those who had slightly impaired vision. Developments in this area are constantly being made. More and more new aids are on the market, to the extent that even the very seriously blind person (if there is even a little sight left) can take advantage of being fitted with proper kinds of glasses to see just a little more.

I am one of those people who is using daily both microscopic and telescopic lenses to see just a little better, where previously, I had to depend on sighted readers struggling to read college and professional materials not available in Braille. Now I can read these materials with 4 power microscopic spectacle. I also use different magnifications, such as 1-½ power, 2 power, 6 power and 8 power, for specific purposes. Binocular and monocular aids are also used for watching television, telling time from a raised wall clock, girl watching (from a great distance, of course), and just plain traveling

Without all of these aids, I would be just as blind as I had been from the beginning. With them I have the illusion of seeing 20/20, especially when I can look at beautiful people and things!

Aloha from Fred Hayashi

P.S. For further information concerning visual aids of all kinds, see your favorite doctor (if you have such) or contact Ho'opono's Low Vision Clinic. I would recommend you try. It might be an eye opener for you. But each individual will have to make his own move along these areas.

TEXAS CONVENTION

The 1970 annual convention of the Blue Bonnet State Federation of the Blind was held November 21, at the Southland Hotel in Dallas, Texas. John Taylor, who represented the National Federation of the Blind, participated throughout the convention and delivered the banquet address Saturday evening. An enthusiastic group of Texans, representing several groups and cities of the State, arrived Friday evening and remained throughout the convention, discussing business matters, plans for the 1971 NFB Convention, and methods and techniques involved in stimulating the further growth of the National Federation of the Blind in Texas.

During the day, the program featured major addresses, followed by questions given by Mr. Edward Adair, who represented the Texas Department of Public Welfare; Mr. Glen Crawford, representing the Texas Commission for the Blind, and Mr. Homer Oliver, of the Social Security Administration. These representatives presented in-depth discussions of the programs they represented and the conventioners asked many pertinent questions. All Federationists agreed that they had participated in an excellent program.

Near the close of the afternoon session, President Glenn Crosby discussed plans for the 1971 NFB Convention. To assist in raising additional funds, with which to make it an outstanding national Convention many Texas Federationists pledged amounts to be paid monthly between now and July of 1971. A preliminary tally of these pledges

indicated that they will bring in more than seventy dollars for each of the next several months. Big plans are under way to welcome NFB Convention delegates with all the hospitality for which Texas is noted.

This was an election year for the Blue Bonnet State Federationists, and the following officers were chosen: President, Mrs. Gladys Taylor of Houston; first vice president, Glen Crosby; second vice president, Louie Vinson; secretary, Bernice Ruffin; treasurer, Malcom Coney; and board members, Linda Allenbaugh, Albert Wilson, and Sydney Ward.

Glenn Crosby was elected NFB Convention delegate. All Federationists throughout the nation, come to Texas in 1971. This will be an unforgettable experience.

* * * * *

THE DISABLED ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

by

Henry P. Brehm

[Reprinted from the *Social Security Bulletin*. Mr. Brehm is in the Division of Disability Studies, Office of Research and Statistics of HEW.]

Despite the existence of disability benefits under the old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance (OASDHI) program, the number of persons receiving public assistance under the aid to the permanently and totally disabled (APTD) and aid to the blind (AB) programs has risen in recent years.

Disability benefits under OASDHI are related to extensive earlier work experience and provide protection to insured disabled adults and their dependents. Adult children of retired, disabled, or deceased beneficiaries who were disabled before reaching age eighteen can be paid childhood disability benefits. Public assistance payments are available to disabled persons without regard to work experience. Disabled persons with inadequate income may qualify for APTD, AB, or, if minor children are present, for aid to families with dependent children (AFDC).

Of the approximately 1,750,000 adults under age sixty-five receiving public assistance from the three Federal-State programs in December 1965, some two-thirds were disabled. Although AFDC, unlike APTD and AB, was not designed to provide assistance for the disabled, about one-third of the adults with AFDC payments were receiving assistance as incapacitated parents. Among disabled women under age forty-five, AFDC payments were received more frequently than payments under APTD and AB, but older women and men in all age groups were predominantly on the APTD or AB rolls.

Data from the 1966 Social Security Survey of Noninstitutionalized Disabled Adults provide information on the extent of overlap between OASDHI and public assistance payments, as well as the characteristics of the disabled receiving public assistance only.

According to the survey, 1,268,000 persons reported as disabled were receiving public assistance in 1965. Of these recipients, 794,000 were getting payments

under APTD or AB and 474,000 received AFDC or other public assistance

Altogether, 188,000 disabled beneficiaries received public assistance: about two-thirds of them under APTD or AB and one-third under AFDC or other assistance. Of the beneficiaries getting APTD or AB, 86,000 were disabled-worker beneficiaries or childhood-disability beneficiaries, and the others were early-retirement or survivor beneficiaries.

The survey found 1,079,000 disabled public assistance recipients who were not receiving OASDI benefits. Two-thirds of these nonbeneficiaries met the survey definition of severe disability. Comparisons of various characteristics were made between severely disabled nonbeneficiaries receiving public assistance and all disabled-worker beneficiaries, ninety percent of whom did not receive public assistance.

To receive disability insurance benefits an applicant must be insured under the program and exhibit a degree of impairment that medically equates with an inability to engage in substantial gainful activity. As a group, those on public assistance showed levels of OASDHI coverage much lower than those of disabled-worker beneficiaries. Among the severely disabled receiving only public assistance in 1966, one-fourth had the twenty quarters of coverage generally required for disabled-worker benefits; more than two-fifths had no coverage at all.

The severely disabled who were public assistance recipients were not as functionally limited as the disabled-worker

beneficiaries. The public assistance group showed a severe loss in functional capacity or function dependency less often than the disabled-worker beneficiaries.

The majority of public assistance recipients, including those severely disabled, had never applied for disabled-worker benefits. Most of them did not have the required work experience under OASDHI to be insured for disability. Of the severely disabled who had applied, slightly more had been denied than had been awarded benefits.

Of the 1,079,000 nonbeneficiary public assistance recipients at all levels of severity of disability, nearly a fourth were disabled in childhood, one-sixth had sufficient quarters of coverage to meet the insured-status provisions for disability benefits in effect in 1966, and three-fifths were disabled as adults but did not meet the insured-status provisions.

The 255,000 nonbeneficiaries with disabilities that started in childhood pose a different type of problem than do others who receive only public assistance payments. They are comparable to the childhood-disability beneficiaries under OASDHI. Those too disabled to work were unable to earn the quarters of coverage needed for disability-insured status. Those capable of working even though disabled would probably not meet the medical listings. This does not mean they are capable of working at a level of self-support, however, as indicated by their need for public assistance. Close to half the nonbeneficiary public assistance recipients who were disabled in childhood were dependent members of a household and under age forty-five. Most of them probably lived with working-age parents

and were therefore not eligible for OASDHI benefits.

Among the nonbeneficiaries disabled as adults who did not have insured status, 161,000 were men and 491,000 were women. About 120,000 of the men were receiving APTD or AB, and 40,000 were getting AFDC or other public assistance. Of the women without insured status, 225,000 were on the AFDC or other public assistance rolls, and 250,000-275,000 were receiving APTD or AB.

These assistance recipients obviously were not able to qualify for disability benefits. Liberalizing the insured-status provisions for disability to the fully insured requirement now used for retirement benefits and an increased effort to secure applications might result, on the basis of the existing ratio between benefit awards and denials, in about 80,000 more public assistance recipients becoming disabled-worker beneficiaries. These steps would not, however, appreciably reduce the number of disabled persons receiving public assistance.

Analysis of the characteristics of the disabled receiving public assistance indicates that most of them are not eligible to receive disabled-worker benefits because they fall outside the basic concept of a disabled-worker population implicit in the social security program. The program provides insurance benefits for the disabled worker with regular employment before the onset of a health impairment that leaves him unable to work.

Disabled nonbeneficiaries receiving public assistance differ from all disabled-worker beneficiaries in several

ways that have a bearing on their potential for receipt of social security benefits. They have had a much weaker attachment to the labor force than beneficiaries, a fact that is readily apparent in a comparison of work histories at the onset of disability. Only fifty-three percent of the severely disabled on the public assistance rolls were employed at the onset of their disabilities, but nine out of ten disabled-worker beneficiaries had jobs. Some of this difference can be explained by their respective ages at onset of disability. Those in the public assistance group were both younger and disabled earlier than the disabled-worker beneficiaries. These facts notwithstanding, the public assistance recipients were also disabled somewhat longer than the disabled-worker beneficiaries.

When those on the public assistance rolls do have work histories, the employment most often is in occupations that require less skill and training and usually offers the individual less job security and fewer job opportunities than the employment of disabled-worker beneficiaries.

The public assistance recipients were also not as well educated as the disabled-worker beneficiaries. Fifty-nine percent of the disabled-worker beneficiaries had no more than an eighth-grade education; and three percent had no formal education. Among the severely disabled assistance recipients, seventy-four percent had no more than an eighth-grade education; twelve percent had no schooling.

When an individual with a low level of education, skill, or training is disabled, even moderately, he may have trouble

finding or keeping a job that pays enough to keep him off the assistance rolls. His impairment may not meet the social security standards for inability to engage in substantial gainful activity, yet he may not be able to stay employed. The situation becomes even more complicated if the disabled person is not white or is an unmarried female with minor children.

The data indicate that the nonbeneficiary public assistance population is not as well-educated or as functionally limited as the disabled-worker population. They are also younger, more of them are women, more often they belong to races other than white; and they are more often unmarried persons with dependent children. These factors, in combination with the circumstances of labor-force history and identification, add up to a general social problem that does not fit within the present framework of insurance against the economic hazards of disability for an employed population.

The circumstances of being disabled and on public assistance can be seen in several areas. The severely disabled receiving public assistance only had a slightly higher percentage in the labor force in 1966 than did disabled-worker beneficiaries, but they did not show any substantial work involvement. Only eleven percent of these persons were employed, and for them the work was on a part-time basis.

Large differences in income were shown for disabled-worker beneficiaries and severely disabled public assistance recipients. Overall, the median income for disabled-worker beneficiaries was more than one hundred percent higher than that for severely disabled nonbeneficiaries

getting assistance payments; the percentage difference in income varied with marital status and sex. Eighty-four percent of the severely disabled public assistance recipients were poor; an additional nine percent were near poor. Among the disabled-worker beneficiaries, thirty-five percent were poor and fifteen percent near poor—on the basis of the Social Security Administration poverty and low-income indexes.

MONITOR MINIATURES

The U. S. Food and Drug Administration has announced that it will require safety glass in all eyeglasses Americans wear. The FDA estimates that 100,000 adults and 20,000 school age children are injured each year by accidents in which eyeglasses are shattered. The proposed regulation will require that eyeglass lenses, including those in nonprescription sunglasses, be made of either heat-tempered, impact-resistant glass or laminated glass or plastic. The additional cost will be minimal. Also, of course, if glasses are dropped they will not shatter into pieces. Thus the extra expense will really be cheap insurance.

During the 1970 session of the California Legislature, the California Council of the Blind sponsored eleven bills, seven of which passed and four failed. Of those passed, six were signed and one was vetoed by the Governor. Among the new laws were provision for a "pass on" of \$7.50 a month of income

from any source to the 320,000 recipients of Old Age Security and Aid to the Disabled (the blind have had this provision in their Aid Law for seven years); permission for the State Library to duplicate any Braille book master; extension of Aid to Potentially Self-Supporting Blind assistance to persons attending the State Orientation Center; and a raise from \$8 a month to \$10 a month in the amount paid on health insurance premiums by the State for workers in the State's sheltered workshops. Among the very important bills which failed of passage were the creation of an independent Office of Services for the Blind which would have had jurisdiction of all rehabilitation functions for the blind; and a measure which would have added the blind to the Fair Employment Practices law, forbidding discrimination in employment.

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The Nation's welfare rolls have ballooned twenty percent in the past year to a record 12.2 million persons, the government's latest statistics show. The increase of two million welfare recipients in the last two years is causing a severe tax squeeze at all levels of government and cutbacks in some welfare services and payments. Government experts cite three factors in the welfare surge: The lagging economy and attendant unemployment; recent court rulings and administrative decisions loosening welfare eligibility requirements, and a new willingness among the poor to apply for welfare following publicity campaigns by antipoverty organizations describing relief as a right and not a mark of discredit. The Federal Government pays about fifty-two per cent of the nation's welfare bill while

State and local governments split the remainder. The cost of federally-assisted welfare has doubled in the past four years. The bulk of the welfare load increase in the past year has come in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program where about eighty per cent of the recipients are abandoned children or those whose mothers are unmarried.

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The Corning Glass Company in New York provides a cassette set to blind persons touring the plant which describes the entire tour as it progresses. The unit is lightweight, two-and-a-quarter pounds, including batteries, has a shoulder strap for comfort and earphone for individual listening. Using the thirty-nine minute prerecorded cassette, the Corning people describe the highlights of the three major areas on the tour: the Museum of Glass, Hall of Science and Industry, and the Steuben factory. There are twenty-six major areas of interest identified by the letters of the alphabet A through Z. On the cassette a description is given of each area followed by an audio signal which indicates to shut off the unit and proceed to the next area when the unit is turned on again.

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Honors and accolades were heaped upon J. Walton Tuttle at a testimonial dinner sponsored jointly by the blind lawyers of Massachusetts and the Bay State's Commission for the Blind. Tuttle lost his sight through an accident when he was fifteen. Admitted to the practice of law before the courts in 1920, this blind pioneer commenced the general practice of law and developed a most successful

law business over the past fifty years. For several terms Tuttle was a member of the House of Representatives of the Massachusetts Legislature. Because this blind man, with few models to show the way, ventured into a skeptical and unwelcoming profession, the blind Massachusetts lawyers paid tribute to Tuttle for leading the way for them by his example. Many notables attended the dinner including Honorable James Hannon, blind judge in the Massachusetts District Court; John F. Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office of the NFB; John Mungovan, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind; William Bruce, vice-dean of the Harvard Law School; Philip Pofcher, blind Boston lawyer and vice-president of the American Blind Lawyers Association, and Honorable William E. P. Powers, blind associate justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court.

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The Attorney General of Michigan recently ruled that families of striking workers are as eligible as other needy families for full public welfare assistance and food stamps. Striking workers cannot be discriminated against because they are voluntarily out of work, even if the strike was illegal.

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The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan recently helped organize its newest chapter in Detroit. At the organizational meeting a discussion was led by Evelyn Weckerly, State President, on the objectives of the National Federation of the Blind and the means of achieving them. Emphasis was placed on

the importance of local chapters as the building blocks of the organized blind movement. There was the showing of a filmed interview with Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, NFB President, made by Toledo area newsmen. Everyone felt that this film did much to bring the Federation and its goals into sharper focus. The Michigan Newsletter states that this newest of its local affiliates began with a charter membership of fifteen and expects to double attendance within a month.

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Lions Clubs in the San Fernando Valley (California) participated in a district-wide project which raised money so that the Twin Vision Publishing Division of the American Brotherhood for the Blind could purchase a \$6,200 collator. Twin Vision now has more than one million pieces of paper to collate each year, and so a collator is desperately needed.

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The Senate Finance Committee rejected overwhelmingly President Nixon's Family Assistance Plan, the vote being 14 to 1. Thus it appears slim that the Plan will pass the 91st Congress, in spite of the President's calling his scheme "the most significant social legislation in 35 years." The final decision will be made in the post-election session when administration forces attempt on the Senate floor to reverse the Finance Committee's recommendation and attach the President's Plan to a benefit-boosting Social Security bill. The House of Representatives passed the Family Assistance Plan last April on a 243 to 155 roll call.

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The American Bible Society recently presented to the Library of Congress an album of the first scripture recorded on cassette tapes comprising the entire New Testament in Today's English Version. The Scripture recording is on fifteen pocket-size cassette tapes, in contrast to the five large Braille volumes needed to provide the same material.

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At sixty-four years of age Henri van den Bergh of the Netherlands is still climbing some of the toughest mountain peaks in Europe and is still skiing and teaching youngsters how to ski. The remarkable thing about it is that for twelve years van den Bergh has been blind.

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At the start of 1970 about half the workers in this country, including three quarters of all government civilian personnel, were members of retirement programs other than Social Security. By comparison, in 1940 less than one-fifth of all employees in commerce and industry, and less than half of all government workers, had such coverage.

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The Internal Revenue Service now has 31 blind persons in major offices across the country answering telephones and fielding taxpayers' questions. They are among the 1,300 taxpayer service representatives who give advice for free. Although the taxpayer with a problem has no way of knowing whether the voice of the expert on the telephone is that of a blind person, it's possible he could hear the click of an abacus. The Oriental

calculating instrument is used by most of the blind tax experts for arithmetic problems. They wear telephone headsets to keep their hands free. The IRS started the program of training blind persons to be tax experts four years ago and the experience has been highly successful.

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According to the Iowa Association of the Blind's *Bulletin*, a number of blind Iowans have entered new occupations and professions. The wide variety of jobs involved as well as the increasing acceptance of blind persons in the competitive labor market cannot fail to be encouraging to all blind Iowans desiring equal opportunities to compete in the labor market on the basis of ability rather than disability. New careers include lawyers, teachers, telephone operators, computer programmers, masseurs, and many others. *The Braille Monitor* joins the IAB *Bulletin* in saluting and congratulating these and other blind Iowans just entering the labor market. Their success will encourage others far beyond the borders of Iowa by broadening the prospects for all who are preparing to enter the labor market or who may wish to change jobs or seek promotions.

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Dr. Richard E. Hoover, an ophthalmologist of Baltimore, Maryland, was recently awarded the Migel Medal by the American Foundation for the Blind for his outstanding work toward the prevention of blindness and for the development of the long cane and the technique for its use. The long-cane travel technique was developed in working with blinded veterans after World War II. Dr.

Hoover has served as chairman for the low-vision aids for the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness for the past ten years and is a member of the board of directors of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped and of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind.

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A story in the Denver, Colorado, *Post* tells about the attitudes and accomplishments of Joanne Unrein, seventeen. Joanne rides a bicycle and does almost anything else that appeals to her--roller skating, bowling, horseback riding, swimming, and tubing down the South Platte River. She has been blind since birth, but believes in getting as much out of life as she can. "I feel I can do anything but see. And I try it, too. My poor mom. I shake her up so many times," she said. Joanne plans to enter Metropolitan State College this fall to study speech and drama. Her life's ambition is teaching. "I want to teach the deaf how to talk and the blind how to act on the stage. I always liked acting."

Joanne includes knitting, sewing, ironing, cooking, reading, and playing the piano among her activities. Joanne's mother credits her daughter's ophthalmologist, Dr. J. Leonard Swigert, with getting the family's "Joanne-can-do-it" philosophy off to a good start. Swigert is the father of astronaut Jack Swigert.

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An article in the Pasco, Washington, *Tri-City Herald* describes Kenn and Kitt Russell, "The Specialists", a blind musical duo who specialize in popular music of the Beatles and Simon & Garfunkel variety. Says Kitt, "most people don't realize we aren't upset about being blind. I think it upsets them more." People ask her husband what she likes to drink, or ask the bartender if she can really see. Fans may act as if by not being able to see she's left deaf, speechless, and without terribly much sense. So Kitt and Kenn prefer large cities. "We're like all the other minority groups who find life simpler in the cities. The people are more relaxed about someone 'different'." And there are more jobs.

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